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A  
V I E W  
O F  
E N G L A N D  
TOWARDS THE  
CLOSE of the EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BY  
FRED. AUG. WENDEBORN, LL.D.

Translated from the Original GERMAN, by the  
AUTHOR himself.

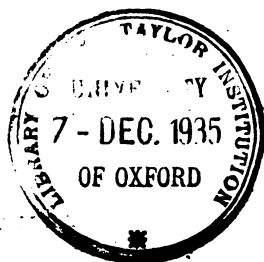
IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

SPEAK OF ME AS I AM.      Shakesp. Othello.

L O N D O N,  
Printed for G. G. J. and J. ROBINSON, Paper-noster-Row,

MDCXCII.



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PART THE FIRST.

ON

LITERATURE

AND

A R T S.

Vol. II.

B





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ON THE  
STATE OF LEARNING IN  
GENERAL.

**W**HOEVER is in the least acquainted with the annals of literature, and the history of the learned, knows how well the English have deserved with respect to the promotion of science, and the cultivation of all branches of learning. Whether it be true, as many of them seem to suppose, that they are the most learned nation on the globe, I will not decide. Perhaps national pride, and too little knowledge of the state of learning in other countries, may have produced such an opinion; from which, however, many truly learned Englishmen are free, who do full justice to the learning of other nations. Those sciences which require deep meditation, and abstract study, are cultivated by the English with the greatest success. They yield in this respect to no nation whatever, if they are not superior to any. It is said of them,

#### 4 ON THE STATE OF

that they are not endowed with great powers of invention ; but, I think, a Bacon, a Shakespeare, a Newton, may prove the contrary ; and I am certain, that if they are once upon the scent, they will generally go as far as possible. Besides, they have this advantage, that among them the prejudices derived from supposed authority, and opinions established merely by length of time, are neither so common, nor so powerful in their influence, as is observable among other nations. Antiquity, and education, will frequently instil into the mind so great a veneration for old systems, and their pretended sanctity, that it is impossible afterwards to view such Gothic buildings, without a kind of awe. In England, the generality of the people are apt to reason for themselves, and by that means they stand a fair chance of succeeding in the pursuit of truth, the great and first object of all learning ; though there are numerous instances here likewise, to prove, that even among those who are called learned, many are to be found, who have neither power nor inclination to divest themselves of old prejudices. They will rather adhere, either from weakness or from other motives, to their old systems, which reason would have shewn them to be exploded, if they were possessed of a sufficient strength of mind,  
and

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 5

and an honest impartiality to listen to it. I shall hereafter have opportunities, in more than one respect, to prove what I have here said.

We entertain on the continent high ideas of the great encouragement given in England to learning, and to those who cultivate the sciences; or are friends and admirers of the Muses. No where, it is thought, are more to be found, who deserve the praises of a Mæcenas than on this island; but our ideas, in this respect, are rather too high and too sanguine. When I first came hither, I brought similar notions over with me; but my ideas on the subject were soon considerably altered, when I became more acquainted with the way of thinking among the modern English, and with the literary history of their country. There are, undoubtedly, encouragements to learning and its pursuits, which are held out by church and state; but they are precarious, and the rewards too often shared among those, who, notwithstanding their pretensions, ought to be called illiterate. It is commonly the whole public taken together, which acts the part of a Mæcenas, and not only praises, but sometimes amply rewards, the man of learning for his works, his talents, and his application; or the ingenious artist for the productions of his genius and his industry. The pen-

## 6 ON THE STATE OF

tion list of government is long, and very expensive to the nation ; but I believe that very few names of persons, eminent for learning and abilities, are to be found upon it ; and they are, perhaps, only kept in pay for some state purposes. The great, the nobles, the rich, spend and squander away great sums of money ; but very few can spare any thing for the encouragement of arts and sciences, except it were for the sake of personal praise, or for superficial amusement. The gaming-table, horseracing, a favourite female, and an ostentatious way of living, require so much, that little or nothing is left to encourage the scholar or the artist ; and those, who by trade and commerce do all they can to enrich themselves, are, if not ignorant, at least too fond of their money ; and will lay out none, but for the sake of interest and profit, or to gratify pride and ostentation.

Many authors and artists have made their fortunes in England, when they had the good luck to succeed with the public, and to meet with rewards, derived from the contributions of the community at large. Thus Pope acquired a competency, such as seldom falls to the lot of poets ; and there are instances where bookfellers, probably not so much from motives of promoting learning, and of rewarding

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 7

learned men, as from a desire to serve their own interest, have proved to be the best substitutes for a Mécenas to authors. This, however, greatly depends on circumstances and accidents. Milton obtained with difficulty the small sum of ten pounds for the first edition of his *Paradise Lost*; while Goldsmith for some of his poems, printed on a few sheets only, was paid an hundred guineas, or more, by the booksellers. Thomson, when he produced his now much admired poem *The Seasons*, could hardly procure a printer who would undertake it; but he was rewarded, at last, by the whole public. Yet this public, which thinks itself so sharp-sighted, was first to be told by somebody, that the poem was excellent, and that its author deserved encouragement and reward. Newton, it is said, might, perhaps, have remained unnoticed among his countrymen, if a foreigner, Huygens, had not first raised their attention to him. Let us, therefore, not entertain too high an opinion of an English public, as supposing it completely enlightened; for it resembles in many respects our publics abroad, who are first to be put in mind of their duty, and stand in need of spectacles, because their eyesight is weak, and their predilection for old tales very strong. Shakspeare, Dryden, Or-

## 8      ON THE STATE OF

way, Sale, the translator of the Koran, and lately a Chatterton, besides many more, can prove, that the English public is not always to be depended upon, any more than those of other countries. Butler, the author of Hudibras, lived and died in poverty. Sir Christopher Wren, after having erected so great a number of monuments of architecture, which will perpetuate his memory for many centuries to come, was ungenerously deprived of his office; but this, indeed, was the act of the crown, and not of the public. However, a great many lives of learned Englishmen might be collected, to enlarge a book which was written, in Latin, on literary men who were unhappy, and struggled with misfortunes. The English public, however, notwithstanding what I have said, has reason to be proud, that it encourages arts and sciences more, and rewards merit better, than is usual among other nations. In saying this, I have not those premiums in view, which are held out, or given by parliament for some useful inventions; I mean only those private subscriptions to promote the undertakings of the learned or the artist, and the readiness, if I may not say eagerness, with which their works are bought, and consequently the authors rewarded. Jean Batisfe Rouffeau, and  
after

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 9

after him Voltaire, laid the foundation of their good fortunes; as authors, in England; and, during the time of my residence in this country, several writers have disposed of the copies of their works in the most advantageous manner; some even have received many thousand pounds for them, and have acquired considerable fortunes. These instances, however, are not very common, and the good success of many an author has, perhaps, depended more on circumstances, and the whim of the public, than his own merits. But, after all, it must be owned, that in no country can learning and genius expect encouragement with more probability than in England, where the improvements in arts and sciences, and the rewards attending them, originate in the patronage of the people. Kings and princes give sometimes small pensions to men of learning and to artists; but he is infinitely better off, who succeeds with the English public, and is favoured by them. Besides, the rewards given by the great are not frequent, oftentimes scanty, and even precarious; when, on the contrary, an English public raises its favourites now and then to a state of independency, without laying them under a disagreeable obligation. It is, however, true, that this very public sometimes squanders away its rewards



wards without good sense, and where there is no merit to deserve them. A skipping and capering opera-dancer will gain, perhaps, more money in one winter-season with his toes, than a learned and enlightened man, is able to earn by the labours of his head, during his whole life-time. If Taffo's muse had sung to the English, he never would have returned so rich to his country as many of his capon-like countrymen do, after they have fiddled or squeaked in the most unnatural manner, before what is called a refined English audience.

Speaking here of the encouragement and the rewards of those who are eminent for their writings, I will not omit to remark, that they are in a considerable degree secured against the danger of being deprived of the fruits of their labour, by pirated editions of their works. This is a real grievance, of which our German writers, of some eminence, have just reason to complain. Their works are scarcely printed, and begin to get into some repute, when a pirated edition, published by a dishonest bookseller, who lives in another principality, and under a different jurisdiction, deprives the original proprietor of the rewards which he expected, and, perhaps, was intitled to, from the public. In Great Britain, an author, or  
the

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 11

the bookseller to whom he sells his copy, has, by an act of parliament, in which literary property is settled, the profits of his works to himself, for fourteen years together, from the time of the publication of the first edition; and if he survives this period, he may renew his right for as many years more. Should he die before this term is expired, he may leave his literary property in his will, for the remaining years, to whom he pleases. If, therefore, works are well received, and are really valuable, they may become a source of good revenues to an author, or his bookseller. In the same manner, a composer of music, an engraver, or other such artists, may have their productions secured to themselves as their property. This, indeed, is a great encouragement to genius; and it were to be wished that all countries, where arts and sciences have made any progress, would imitate this example which the English have given. Since, however, the best of institutions are liable to abuse, so it may be said, that this equitable and wise law, for the encouragement of literature, has accidentally been the means of rendering good literary works dear, and raised the price of some publications above their real value. Within these twenty years, I have observed, that many  
books,

books, on supposition that they would be well received, are published in a splendid manner, to raise the price of them. For mercantile reasons, the manuscript, which, without hurting the eyes of the reader, might have been handsomely printed off in a decent octavo volume, is presented to the public in a pompous quarto, where the text like a rivulet runs through a field of margin. This is quite the reverse of our paltry way of printing the generality of our books in Germany, where the pages are so crammed, that hardly any margin is left; as if the types were used to hide the colour of that abominable paper upon which most of them are printed; though many of our modern publications deserve to appear in a more handsome manner, and more pleasing to the eye. Indeed, I cannot help wishing, as English literary productions are so much esteemed and translated in Germany, that our printers and book-sellers, would imitate the manner and elegance with which English books are printed. The price of them is rather high; but when I compare it to that of our German books of equal size, printed upon such disgusting paper, I am inclined to think, that, comparatively speaking, books printed in Germany are dearer than the English. This appears the more unreasonable

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 13

able on our side, since English bookfellers, in proportion, pay dearer for the copies of authors than our Germans do, and printing is more expensive than with us. It was, in the year 1784, on occasion of the commercial treaty with Ireland, asserted, by two eminent London bookfellers, who were examined at the bar of the house of commons, that the value of the copy-right, bought by the bookfellers in Great Britain, amounted at present, to no less than 200,000 l. sterling, which makes 1,200,000 dollars of our money ; a sum, which, I believe, all our bookfellers in Germany together, extensive as the country is, and fertile of literary productions, have hardly paid to their authors for copies within a century. Yet it is astonishing, that the amount of money, which circulates annually among the bookfellers, at the Leipfic and Francfort fairs, is reckoned, upon good grounds, to be 500,000 dollars, or somewhat more than 80,000 l. sterling.

Being here inadvertently led to that kind of commerce, which is carried on with literary productions, I will add a few observations, relative to the number of books which are annually printed in Germany, compared with those that appear, within the same space of time, in England. It is calculated with some certainty, that

that they amount, on an average, to five thousand. I have, for six following years, calculated those, which in English Reviews are announced annually, and the number of them, small pamphlets and single sermons excepted, is, on an average, not much above six hundred. Consequently, the proportion, between books annually published in England and in Germany, is almost as one to nine. Though it ought to be kept in mind, that Germany is inhabited by more than one and twenty millions of people, and England and Scotland together, by about nine; yet it is astonishing, that the itch of writing in our country should be so great, that there, within a year, almost as much is printed as in all the rest of Europe, within the same space of time. This, by no means, redounds to our honour, though some of our polygraphers may think differently; and other nations, particularly the English and the French, have, long ago, blamed us very justly for it. Strong as the expressions are, which sir Richard Steele makes use of in his *Tatler*<sup>1</sup>, yet there is a good deal of truth in them, when he says: “They (the blockheads introduced  
“ in the *Epistole obscurorum virorum*), are mostly  
“ of the German nation, whence from time to

<sup>1</sup> *TATLER*, N<sup>o</sup> 197, vol. iv. p. 30.

“ time

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 15

“ time, inundations of writers have flowed, more  
“ pernicious to the learned world than the  
“ swarms of Goths and Vandals to the politic.”

The reasons why so much is printed and published in Germany, are various ; and being properly investigated, it may, perhaps, at last appear, that the propensity to writing among the English is almost as great as among the Germans, notwithstanding the annual number of publications in Germany exceeds so much those in England. I have thought a little upon this subject, and I wish here to communicate a few observations concerning it. Perhaps there is no nation, which is so eager to read books published in other countries and foreign languages, as ours ; consequently, the translations of them are exceedingly numerous. Very nearly two thirds of the new publications, which appear among us, within a year, are translations of books, originally written in foreign languages ; and, therefore, hardly fifteen hundred will remain out of the five thousand, as original writings and compilations of all kinds. In England, translations of foreign books begin, at present, to appear more frequently, but, in proportion, are much fewer than with us ; and our hungry translators and booksellers do not care how insignificant and undeserving some  
foreign

foreign publications may be, if they can only dupe our reading public, and extort a little money from them. On perusing our annual Catalogues and Literary Reviews, in which new books are announced, it will be found, that those which relate to religion are the most numerous. There is no end of dogmatical, exegetical, and polemical works, of volumes of sermons, and books of devotion. Some of these pious authors want to clear up old doctrines, and to explain inexplicable mysteries; some write prolix commentaries, and think nobody before them has thrown so much light upon the sacred writings as they; some fight the good cause of their respective sects, and defend the holy tenets, by which they distinguish themselves from others, and claim an exclusive right to the kingdom of heaven; in short, there is no end of these, as they often are very improperly called, religious writings. On consulting on the contrary, the English Reviews, it will be found, that the articles in these monthly publications, mentioned under the head of Divinity and Controversy, are not very numerous; though there are among the different sects in England, always some too, who publish, in their own way, books and tracts, relating to religion, and, perhaps, far more than there is occasion for; but their number

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 17

ber is trifling, when compared with the literary inundations of this kind in Germany. In law, our publications are likewise more numerous than in England. Here the constitution, and the manner in which justice is administered, happily require not a great many new publications. With us the branches of jurisprudence, which are in use, are very various; and almost every little principality has its own constitution, as far as it is not inconsistent with that of the Germanic empire. Hence so many authors among us, whose pens are busy in different parts of the law, explaining or commenting upon them; whereas in England, besides the voluminous statute law, some few standard law-books, whose repute is established, supersede numerous law publications, though there are by no means wanting new ones which appear from time to time. In books relating to physic, and the various branches of medicine, we likewise exceed those which are annually published in Great Britain, in number, though I cannot say in intrinsic value. It is no wonder that it is so. Germany being much more extensive than England, has, of course, a greater number of physicians; and their repute, particularly of those who are professors in universities, depends much on their writings, which is not the case in England. The same may be said of our philolo-



gical writers, and of those who chuse for their object what are called Belles Lettres. Patronage is with us neither very extensive, nor has it to dispose of such good things as that in England, where he who meets with a good patron can make his fortune, and get into places of great emolument, though he be ever so illiterate; but in Germany, some Roman Catholic provinces excepted, a person, who wishes to obtain some emoluments annexed to literature, from those who have the disposal of them, stands generally the best chance when he can shew that he has a claim to it, by reason of a meritorious literary publication. If, therefore, numbers are prompted by ridiculous vanity to commence authors, others do it from necessity, and because they look upon it as a means to promote their interest. This will account, in some degree, for the numerous tribe of writers, the generality of whom do not much credit either to themselves or to their country. But, paradoxical as it may appear at first, yet I believe it can be proved, that the host of those beings, called authors, are proportionably as numerous in England as in Germany.

A few observations which I shall make on this subject, will explain and confirm this assertion. In the first place, all books written in our language are not the produce of Germany alone;

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 19

alone ; the greater part of Switzerland, East and West Prussia, Livonia, Courland, even some parts of Poland and Hungary, where the German language is spoken, join us in their literary produce. It is no wonder, therefore, if in such an extensive part of Europe, where literature, in general, is much esteemed, the learned and their works should be numerous ; whether they are always worth publishing, is another question. In the second place, let it be considered, that Germany has above one and twenty millions of inhabitants, and England, perhaps, hardly seven ; deducting, therefore, Scotland for those countries where our language is in use, though they do not belong to Germany, sixteen hundred annual new literary productions from our presses, and six hundred from those in England, will be in very good proportion with the number of inhabitants, and rather in favour of the latter. It will likewise appear, that among ten thousand people hardly one turns author. Besides, there are many, particularly in Germany, whose pens and industry are so prolific, that they write more than one work, and consequently lessen the number of other individuals to keep the presses employed. The English have, moreover, the advantage over us, by their numerous magazines, their numberless newspapers, and other periodical publications,

into which those who feel literary spasms, easily find admission to gratify their wish of seeing themselves in print, and increasing the number of writers, without being under a necessity of publishing separately, what they judge proper to favour the public with. This, indeed, till of late, has not been the case with us in Germany, where periodical papers are kept in the hands of a few, who are generally exclusively the heroes of their own tale; and as to our Newspapers, it is very well known, that they are, both in regard to their contents, and the liberty with which they are written, much confined, and of a very different complexion from those of England. If we had so many receptacles for all sorts of writers, we should have fewer separate publications; but our numerous German authors, not having such advantages, they must make pamphlets, or even books, of the little which they have to say, that it may be considerable enough in bulk to appear before the public. It is true, that publications of such kind and size are sufficiently numerous in England; but, nevertheless, it is certain, that the number of separate publications, and of authors, is considerably lessened by these magazines and newspapers, which, on account of the frequency of their publications are so ready to convey the thoughts, the letters, the essays on various

various subjects, the attempts in poetry and prose, which are sent for insertion, to the public, if they are tolerably fit to meet its eye.

Much has been said against these magazines and periodical writings. Mr. Pope calls them "the eruptions of every miserable scribbler; the dirty scum of every stagnant newspaper; the rags of worn out nonsense and scandal, picked up from every dunghill, under the title of essays, reflections, queries, songs, epigrams, &c. equally the disgrace of human wit, morality, and common sense:" but I think that his expressions, and his invective, are rather too vehement. They are undoubtedly of some use, and many a one, who became in time no inconsiderable a writer, has made his first entrance into the literary world by means of these magazines, in which, besides, many valuable things are preserved. It is, however, likewise true, that numbers of miserable scribblers, as Mr. Pope calls them, throw into these collections their essays in prose and in verse, abundantly; which, indeed, proves my assertion, that the number of writers, and the productions of the press in England, are proportionably not smaller than in Germany, where the host of pretended authors, would appear infinitely less, if they

<sup>2</sup> Dunciad. B. i. v. 42. in a note.

were, without mentioning their names, crowded together, in numberless magazines, as is the case in England. Every true friend to literature would wish, that less were published in the republic of letters, and only that which has real merit ; but, from time immemorial, complaints have been made, that worthless writings have far exceeded those of any real value. However, I do not see that the harm done by the former is very great, since they disappear very soon, and are, almost at the moment that they appear, consigned to oblivion. Some old German catalogues, printed a little more than a century ago, which have escaped the devastation of time, announce books which then were published, though at present not a copy, nor even a fragment of them is to be found, because they are used for all other purposes, excepting those for which their authors intended them ; who expected that they should be read, and even, perhaps, flattered themselves that they might immortalize their names. Such catalogues, and the literary journals, as well as biographical works, may be considered as a kind of tomb-stones, to preserve the memory of the deceased, till at last these very tomb-stones themselves moulder away by the force of all devouring time, when the monuments

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 23

uments of a ridiculously expected immortality vanish, and not even a wreck is left behind. How many ancient books, and names of authors are entirely lost, without being regretted. Among the modern ones, how many have already shared their fate, and how many will soon follow! There is, I am certain, besides London, no city on the globe, where the events and the objects of the day, which excite the least attention, are so eagerly caught, as they pass along, by numberless pens, which digest them into pamphlets and diurnal publications, to gratify the various passions of people, and to collect a little money from the public. This at first, when I came to England, surprized me not a little; but, at present, seeing how soon these things, which come merely recommended by novelty, are thrown aside, and forgotten, to make room for others of the same kind, I am perfectly reconciled to this sort of entertainment. Finding, besides, that many trades are benefited by printing and book-making, and that many readers are entertained and sometimes instructed by it, I think the complaint, that there is no end of composing books, no more of so very serious a nature as I did formerly.

In most countries literary publications are ge-

nerally to undergo an examination, by some persons in authority, before they are printed. A censor, appointed by those in possession of the powers of government, is to judge, previously to the printing of a manuscript, whether the author has advanced any thing against the interest of the church, or of the state. According to his verdict, the book either appears or not; it is printed either entirely from the author's copy, or in a mutilated condition. Happily for England, such a censor-office is unknown in all Great Britain, the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge excepted, where, at least formerly, publications, which came from the university presses, were adorned, on the back of the title page, with an *Imprimatur*, or a licence from the censor. In London, and in other places of the British empire, every thing may be printed, without a previous licence. Newspapers, which abroad are so strictly watched, and, before they go to press, carefully examined and curtailed by a censor, are printed in England without being previously by authority looked over, to see whether they contained any thing displeasing to those who are at the helm of church and state. A publication must have already begun to be distributed and to be sold, before the author or printer can  
be

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 25

be sued in a legal way, by those who think themselves injured by it. I hardly expected that a nation, which respects the liberty of the press so much, would suffer any literary work to be condemned to the flames; yet this has happened once within my time. It was the famous number Forty-five of the North Briton, which had, I may almost say, the honour to be burnt by the hands of the hangman, and by this means was raised in reputation beyond its consequence. This is generally the case in such instances; the paper thus executed is then more eagerly sought after and read. True wisdom and policy would rather dictate, that as little notice as possible should be taken of such things, for fear of bringing them into greater repute, and making them more known, than is consistent with the intentions and wishes of those who order such kinds of punishments.

The liberty of the press has much increased in England, within these twenty years. When I first came here, the parliamentary debates were printed and published with great caution. The magazines gave them under the fictitious denomination of a Robin-Hood, or Debating-Club, and the names of the speakers were much disguised. At present it is quite different. The public papers give the debates at large, and the  
names



names of the speakers not only at full length, but even sometimes with severe remarks and bitter criticisms.

As there is no previous examination by authority, of books and printing, so there is none of copper-plates and engraving. The most satirical and the most laughable caricatures are published, and publicly exposed for sale. The great and the low, down from the king to his lowest subjects, are presented before the windows of a print shop, in various attitudes and shapes, to excite mirth among the passengers who pass by in the street. Nobody, from the highest to the lowest, is secure against bitter satires; but I hardly know an instance wherein a printseller was prosecuted by law, for taking such liberties. I cannot help mentioning here, that very immoral and indecent prints, which offend modesty and virtue, are also publicly exposed for sale. There is no doubt of their having bad effects upon the minds of young people; and it certainly reflects no honour upon the London police, that it is so remiss in these matters.

To make the works of the learned, and their merit, known to the public, several Reviews or literary Journals are published on the first day of each month. When I first came to England,  
there

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there were only two, but their number has increased to four. In magazines, which are likewise published monthly, among a hundred other things, some account of new books is generally given; but the first mentioned publications are appropriated entirely to the review of books. It will, perhaps, be thought surprising to many of my countrymen, that so few literary Journals appear in England, when Germany abounds with them, and every town of some consequence and every petty university furnishes at least one literary Gazette or Journal; though in neither of the famous English universities is a single one published. I think, however, that the English act wisely in not multiplying the number of literary tribunals, as we have done; for it is certainly, in more than one respect, not for the advancement of literature and science.

As far as I know, and I have made enquiry, no Reviews or literary Journals are published in Scotland or Ireland. All British authors appear before the critical tribunals erected in London, to receive sentence on the merit or demerit of their works.

I own that the plan of the English reviewers pleases me better than that which prevails in  
ours

ours in Germany<sup>3</sup>. Most of our critics, as they style themselves, endeavour, in their Reviews, to display more their own little learning, than to make their readers acquainted with the contents and merits of the book, of which they pretend to give an account. Instead of relating the contents of it, and shewing the manner of writing, and the style of the author, they too often give only their own ill-founded opinions, and frequently pass judgments with a pertness and arrogance, which neither do credit to their modesty and understanding, nor to their pretensions to learning. The English reviewers generally enable their readers to form a kind of judgment of their own, by giving extracts and pretty long passages from the book. These are not selected merely for the sake of criticizing upon them, as many of our old pedantic, or our young and beardless German critics do; but rather to give specimens of the book and the merit of its author, and to entertain and to instruct the reader in an agreeable manner. I have read, but lately, in one of our modern

<sup>3</sup> What follows here, concerning the German Reviews, might have been left out in this translation, since the original was intended merely for my own countrymen; but, after some consideration, I rather resolved to insert it, as a proof of my impartiality.

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German reviews, which arrogates to itself a kind of superiority to others, as a censure of English reviewers, that they made the task of a critic very easy to themselves, by giving long extracts from the new books which pass through their hands, and that therefore it required no great talents to be an English critic. But this self-conceited censor betrayed certainly neither great knowledge of his profession, nor that necessary candour and commendable modesty, so requisite in a critic, when he gave this as his opinion. To select the useful and the entertaining, with taste and judgment, requires more talents than to assume the airs of a pedantic schoolmaster, who treats his author with insolence, which is generally the offspring of ignorance, and who pretends to find faults, where there are either none, or perhaps such only as do not deserve acrimonious or malignant censure. I know that many amongst the legions of our German journalists, make the business of reviewing very easy to themselves, by reading only the prefaces of books of which they presume to give their opinions to the public. They begin an idle declamation of their own, which has no natural connexion with the subject of their author; they pick out a few short passages to indulge their petulant humour,

or

or, if the author happens to be one of their friends, to bestow oftentimes undeserved praises on his performance; after which they cast a glance of complacency upon the judgment which they have passed, and think themselves most consummate critics, fit to adorn the tribunal which they mounted by their own authority. I could wish, that those of my countrymen whom this resembles, would rather learn of the English how to give a proper account of new publications, than to find fault with their manner of reviewing, which, in my opinion, is preferable to ours in many respects.

As various pens are employed in writing the English literary Journals, it is not to be expected, that in those who use them, the capacities, the taste, the education, and passions, which have so great an influence in the composition of critical works, should be alike. There are every where people who will talk about things, which they do not understand, like the peripatetic Phormio, when he declaimed before Hannibal on the office and duties of a general; but the number of such presuming instructors and critics, is, I am apprehensive, much greater with us, than in England. In most French and English Reviews, though there are many exceptions, more urbanity, and a more gentleman-like

like manner of writing, is generally conspicuous than in ours. The criticisms, which are interspersed between the quoted passages from books which are more circumstantially reviewed, and the judgment commonly given at the conclusion, are mostly candid, and keep the proper medium between that tumid praise, and that malignant censure, which too frequently disgrace our German reviews. The former *Acta Eruditorum Lipsiensia*, were, as to the greatest part of them, written in a masterly manner; but how few of our modern productions of this kind come up to them! Bayle's *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres* are patterns to be imitated by any reviewer; he criticises, but with modesty and candour; he instructs, but without ostentation or impertinence. Let the generality of our critical journalists, and our literary Gazette writers in Germany, be compared with Bayle, and how disgraceful will be the contrast. There is one circumstance more, which I shall mention as honourable to English literary Reviews, and recommend it most seriously to be imitated in my country; which is, that the proprietors of them, as I believe, would not knowingly permit the same book to be reviewed by the same person, who has already inserted an account of it, though disguised,

guised, in another Review. The number of our German literary journals being so great, many a wretched critic, who is in want of bread, engages himself in half a dozen, or even more of them. He sends accounts, a little altered, of one and the same book to them all; and, unknown, pronounces his sentence upon it through many different mouths. The insignificant judgment of such an imposing Stentor, is frequently taken, by those who know no better, for the opinion of the public. I am pretty confident, that there is too much sense of honour and equity in the proprietors or managers of the English Reviews, to permit such an injustice, and such an imposition on the public, unless they were imposed upon themselves.

I shall conclude my observations on this subject, with observing, that the method of announcing new books and literary publications in England, is very different from ours in Germany. We make them chiefly known by those catalogues, which are published twice or three times a year, at the great fairs at Leipzig and Francfort, where our principal booksellers meet, to sell or to exchange among themselves their newly printed books. In England they are announced, by way of advertisements, in public papers, which is a very expensive method

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thod of publishing them. The advertisements, and particularly the duties upon them, are extremely costly. To advertise a book properly, in several newspapers, will amount sometimes to more than twenty pounds sterling. This, indeed, is a hardship under which English literature, authors, and booksellers, are laid, and which may be thought rather inconsistent with a due encouragement for learning, among a nation, which justly lays claim to celebrity in the arts and sciences. The high taxes upon advertisements, besides those with which the materials for printing are heavily burthened, must of course raise the price of books very much. With us in Germany, the publishing of a book costs a mere trifle, even when it is done in a newspaper; our printing materials, and the wages of workmen are cheaper; and yet, I cannot help repeating it, our books, oftentimes printed in a slovenly manner, and upon wretched paper, are in proportion much dearer than the English.

Literary Gazettes, published weekly, of which we have so great a number, are hitherto not to be found in England; at which I somewhat wonder. A publication of this kind, would, in my opinion, be well received, and of great use to the public. Literary works,



and those of artists, both foreign and domestic, might be thereby sooner and more expeditiously made known. All kinds of useful intelligence, relating to arts and sciences, and those who cultivate them, might be easily circulated, if a sufficient number of persons, qualified for such business, and assisted by the principal booksellers, joined in an undertaking of this nature. The contents of such a publication, being of great variety, and merely historical, could by no means interfere with those Reviews that I have mentioned before, which give a more ample and a critical account of the works of the learned. The booksellers, as well as the literati and artists, might be greatly benefited by it. The latter might procure all kinds of literary news, and such as relate to arts; the former might notify to the public their new books, without much expence of advertising; and all those who are now obliged to read numbers of newspapers, to learn what has lately been, or what is going to be published, would here, in one view, find it collected before them. I am aware, that it may be objected, such a literary gazette, with its literary intelligence, would be soon subjected to stamp-duties. I confess, that I am apprehensive, the greedy hand of a state-financier, may not be inclined

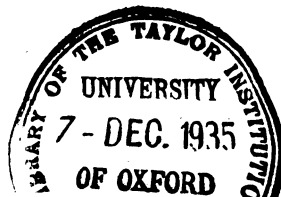
## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 35

inclined to spare such a source of intelligence from the republic of letters, but, under some pretence or other, may burden it with taxes; but I should think the danger might, in a great measure, be avoided, by stripping it of the appearance and form of a newspaper, and giving it in weekly octavo numbers, like other periodical papers. It would, indeed, be hard, and inconsistent with that regard which every liberal-minded man feels for the interests of learning, to tax a literary journal for the sake of an inconsiderable state revenue.

It is said, and very justly, of the English, that many of their authors write well, with solidity and judgment. Liberty and education are the principal causes of this merit. A learned Englishman, if he sits down to write on a subject, which is not of the historical kind, or not intended for a compilation, will not anxiously first collect what others have said and written on it, before him; he will rather investigate truth, unbiassed by the force of his own understanding, and represent it afterwards as he has found it. If he is not spoiled by a pedantically learned education, or prejudiced by early imbibed narrow principles, he will follow nature and his own good sense, as the two best guides he can be led by in his researches. Yet,

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I do not know how it happens, that some English writers seem to be afraid to speak out freely. Many French authors have written, within these fifty years, more boldly and freely on political and religious subjects, than the generality of the English will venture to do; and some of them would have written with still more freedom, if they had lived in England. Fenelon, if that be true which Voltaire says of him \*, would have written and acted quite differently from what he has done as archbishop of Cambray, if he had been born in England. The French authors, whom I have particularly in view, and who have so much contributed by their writings to that glorious revolution which has taken place in France, are here eagerly read, translated, admired, and, perhaps, envied by some; but I do not see that their example is much imitated, or that attempts are made to excel them.

That good and manly taste which distinguishes so many English writers, is greatly owing to the esteem in which the old Greek and Roman classics are held in this island. They

\* RAMSAY élève de ce célèbre Archevêque, m'a écrit ces mots: s'il étoit né en Angleterre, il auroit développé son génie et donné l'essor sans crainte à ses principes que personne n'a connus. *Siècle de Louis XIV.* p. 70.

serve as models for a good style, and a proper manner of writing. They are the touchstone used by the true critic; they are the principal ornaments in English libraries; and the best editions of them, when sold in public auctions, keep always up to their price, like gold and silver plate, when it is disposed of by public sale, according to its intrinsic value. Those who do not understand the original language, in which these classics are written, may read them in very good translations<sup>s</sup>.

Besides these, the works of several English authors, who wrote during the reigns of Charles II. and James II. and within the first thirty years of this century, are reckoned to be classic. They are even now read and esteemed; and I am inclined to think, that this, joined to the predilection for the old Greeks and Romans, is one of the principal causes of that good taste, which is to be met with in many modern English authors. The style and manner of writing are here not so changeable as with us in Germany; for the English are, in this respect, not so variable as they are in fashions and drefs.

<sup>s</sup> In the original German, the English translations of the Greek and Latin classics, are mentioned in alphabetical order; but being well known to the learned in this country, they are here omitted,

I shall now endeavour to give a short sketch of the state of learning in England. The intention of this work, and the limits which I have prescribed to myself, will not permit me to be prolix; and, indeed, I should write the history of literature of this present century, if I would do justice to this subject. I only wish to touch the principal branches of science and learning. The opinions which I may here advance are merely my own; and I am far from presuming to intrude them upon others, or to think they are preferable to those which are entertained by them who think differently.

The language of the country, in which their books are written, deserves to be mentioned in the first place. It is seldom that Englishmen write in any other language than their own. I, therefore, have often wondered, why no society has been instituted for its improvement, of which, in many respects, it seems to stand in need. If this had been done long ago, and if a Lowth, who, in his *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, has pointed out so many grammatical errors in the writings of the best English authors; or if a Harris, whose *Hermes* may be deemed classical, had been at the head of such a society, it might be reasonably supposed, that it would have been of the greatest advantage to  
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## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 39

the language ; but hitherto nothing of this kind had been done, or even attempted. The English being a compound of many ancient and modern languages, receives additions from time to time, and adopts new words, when others, which were before much in use, become obsolete \*. The translation of the Bible, was formerly regarded as a standard, or a classic of the language ; and Dr. Johnson, in his Dictionary, quotes it frequently as an authority ; but it is, at present, no more so. Many words which occur in the Bible, and the orthography of some, would at present not be used by good writers. It has several times been proposed to make a new translation for common use, and under authority, but, hitherto, it has been of no effect.

The pronunciation of the English language is difficult and unsettled ; for there are no rules which, on account of so many exceptions, de-

\* Dr. Johnson, in his great Dictionary, has collected about 48,000 words, and it was then thought that he had left but very few behind. The rev. Mr. Croft, however, has asserted, that he has found more than 11,000, which are omitted. The new Dictionary which he proposes to publish, will, on this supposition, and on account of the new plan he has adopted, have a great superiority over that of Johnson. It is, therefore, much to be wished, that he may meet in his great undertaking, with that encouragement, which it deserves.

pending on whim and custom, are in all instances, to which they seem to belong, applicable. Many words are, by different classes of people, and in different counties, differently pronounced. The dialects in several parts of the kingdom are various, and the country people, in provinces distant from the metropolis, drawl the words when they speak, in the same manner, and with the same tone of voice, as our rustics do their German. Even a foreigner, who has resided a proper time in London, if he has a good ear, will be able to know a Yorkshire man, a Scotchman, or an Irishman, when he speaks, by his pronunciation. But no foreigner, if he is not brought into England at a very early time of life, will ever attain a proper pronunciation of the English. Let him be ever so much a master of the language, he will, by speaking it, soon betray that he is no native of the country. He must expect that the same will happen to him which did to Theophrastus: after residing many years at Athens, and applying himself closely to the Greek in the Attic dialect, he thought he did not betray that he was not born in Attica, and yet an old woman in the market-place at Athens, of whom he wanted to buy apples, found out immediately, by his only speaking a few words, that he was  
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a foreigner<sup>6</sup>. The *th*, the *shibboleth* of most foreigners, betrays them almost instantly ; though I know some who pronounce it perfectly well, and, nevertheless, shew themselves to be foreigners by the pronunciation of other words.

The manner of spelling the English, and the mode of teaching it to children, is totally different from the German, and infinitely more difficult. Since I became acquainted with this method of spelling, and its apparent perplexities, I have left off wondering how the children of the Jews could learn to read Hebrew, before the invention of the points for marking the vowels ; which seemed to me one of the strongest objections against the assertion, that these vowel points are of a modern date. The generality of the common English people spell very indifferently, and this may be said particularly of the women ; among whom, even many of those, who may be said to have received an expensive education, write in a manner that is hardly intelligible.

<sup>6</sup> I have observed, in conversations with modern Greeks, that they pronounce their *θ* exactly as the English do their *th*, and yet these very Greeks, when they speak English, betray immediately, and in a striking manner, that they are foreigners. They pronounce it like Frenchmen, among whom I have never met with one who spoke English tolerably.

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The English language, in my ears, has not that harmony and softness, which are found in some other languages. Even our German, which so often, by those who do not know better, is called a rough and barbarous tongue, has, in my opinion, prejudiced as it may appear, more harmony to boast of, when it is pronounced in one of our best dialects, and is more melodious than the English. A modern English traveller, who is acknowledged to be one of the best judges in matters of sound and melody, though he makes no comparison between the English and the German, yet, he owns, that when he heard German singing for the first time, he was astonished to find that the German language, in spite of all its clashing consonants and gutturals, as he expresses himself, is better calculated for music than the French. And in another place he says, he was confirmed in his opinion, that, except the Italian, the German manner of singing is less vicious and less vulgar than that of any other people in Europe<sup>7</sup>. This could hardly be the case, if the language was not well adapted for music, and was as barbarous as many, who are unacquainted with it, think it to be.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. BURNLEY'S State of Music in Germany, &c. vol. i. p. 84, and 117.

But,

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But, though the English has not that which most pleases the ear ; it possesses, nevertheless, many advantages beyond others. Being very copious, as a selection from many languages, it is nervous and expressive ; it is well adapted for reasoning, though not for declamation ; it speaks to the understanding with energy, but it will not charm the ear with melody, or beauties derived from sound and harmony. Having borrowed or stolen its riches from a variety of tongues, it is capable of a great change and strength of expression. The same thought may be proposed in different views, and represented in various lights, which cannot be done in languages that are more original. I likewise think, that no language is more capable of what the French call *double entendre*, or double meaning, than the English ; or, on account of its conciseness and brevity of expression, is better adapted for epigrams. But, as it happens, the English have no great epigrammatists among their writers ; and Owen, who is well known in this character, wrote in Latin.

As for modern languages, there are not many of the English, who apply themselves to them. Even in great Grammar-schools, the French is no part of the public lessons. In private, or boarding-schools, it is generally taught, when required

required and paid for, by persons who go under the denomination of French-ushers. Whether they are always qualified for such business, is a question, perhaps, not always to be answered in the affirmative. Notwithstanding, those children, of both sexes, which are educated in such schools, learn a little smattering of French, yet they generally forget it after leaving school. Though the French is almost the only modern language which is cultivated in England, in preference to other foreign tongues, it is, however, not frequently spoken, unless the conversation be with a foreigner, who does not understand English, but speaks French, and therefore renders it necessary, I remember that some years ago, scarcely any body durst speak French in the streets of London, or in public places, without running the risk of being insulted by the populace, who took any foreign language to be French, and frequently saluted him, who spoke what they did not understand, with the appellation of French dog. But there is a great alteration in this respect at present.

As navigation, commerce, and connexions for the sake of trade, lead many English into foreign countries over all parts of the globe, it may be naturally supposed, that many, who

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are engaged in the mercantile line, find it necessary to learn something of the languages of those nations, among whom they reside, or with whom they have to do, on account of their trade. This, however, as having no connexion with learning, cannot properly be placed to the account of literature; and I have reason to think, that very few English have any inclination to learn foreign languages, if they can do without them, and if interest and gain do not prompt them to undertake the trouble. It is, therefore, among the learned, particularly those who think Albion to be the only seat of wisdom and knowledge on earth, very uncommon to apply to foreign languages, because they are of opinion, that English books contain every thing which is known, or that is worthy to be learned.

When I first came over into England, our German language and literature were very little known, or, perhaps, held in contempt; and even now, a few English merchants and officers excepted, hardly any among the learned are to be met with who are acquainted with either. A few that I know, have either on their travels, or at home, by industry, learned German, and seem to be very well satisfied with the acquisition they have made. Of late our books have

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got into a little more repute, and I am in hopes that the time is not very far off, when both our language and our literature will be more esteemed in England. At Oxford, some gentlemen of genius, and desirous of extending their knowledge, have within these few years, divested themselves from prejudices in regard to our literature, and have procured for themselves a collection of books from Germany, in order to become acquainted with some of our authors, and our manner of writing. I most sincerely wish, that they may find their trouble and application amply rewarded, and that others may follow so good an example. Then, perhaps, German books will be more common in England and more easily procured; for hitherto no bookseller has thought it worth his while to import any, unless they were previously bespoken, or he had some assurance that they would not be left upon his hands.

The Latin, and the Oriental languages, but particularly the Greek, are much cultivated in England. As to the Latin, there are very few of the English by whom it is spoken. Their pronunciation is so different from that which prevails in all other countries, that it can be of no use in conversation between an Englishman and a foreigner, except one of them

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them could accommodate himself in his pronunciation to the other. I remember that the late Dr. Gregory Sharpe, who, in his younger years, had resided a good while in the university of Leipzig, mentioned to me a pleasant incident which happened to a German gentleman, who, on coming over to England, had been recommended to him. He wanted to introduce him to an English gentleman of learning, who, on finding that the foreigner understood English but very imperfectly, attempted to address him in Latin. It being then only a few months after the peace of Hubertsburg had been concluded, one of the first questions he asked was, *Suntne nunc omnia pacata in Germania?* The other not being used to the English pronunciation, understood *peccata* for *pacata*; and, taking it for a sneer upon his country, replied with some warmth, *Sunt quidem multa peccata in Germania, sed spero plures virtutes.* Dr. Sharpe told me, that he had at first some trouble to bring them to a right apprehension of each other's meaning.

In the year 1767, if I am not mistaken, a design was formed to introduce the foreign pronunciation of Latin and Greek into the two English universities, and the great grammar-schools of the kingdom; but, for what reason

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I know not, the scheme was laid aside again; though it would undoubtedly have been very useful to English gentlemen of learning who travel abroad, and who are not always acquainted with the language of the country that they visit. I have observed, that some of the English are in the habit of calling German Latin, that kind of it, to which we have given the name of culinary or bad Latin, though we have more good Latinists among our writers, than England, perhaps, is able to produce. I confess that the custom, which is now exploded among us, of writing and publishing so many books in Latin, which was deemed a proof of great learning among the pedants of the last century, has produced a great number of Latin performances, which, on reading, will excite disgust; but we have, at the same time, some who have written with a degree of elegance, in the true Roman idiom, that does not yield to any modern production in the Latin language, of any other country. Had we in any of our schools, or universities, such encouragement, and such premiums annually held out, as are given at Oxford or Cambridge, to those who excel in the best Latin compositions, we certainly should abound in productions which would do honour to modern Latinity. But, alas!

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alas! our young scholars have no such incitements, and we may apply to us the lamentation of Martial :

Sint Mæcenates, non deerunt, Flacce, Marones !.

The Greek language has been, for ages together, in great esteem in this country. Among the learned, both ecclesiastics and laymen have applied to it with uncommon assiduity. Even among the nobility, and people of fortune and independence, many are to be found, who are good Greek scholars, and read a Greek author with ease. This is more than can be said of our German nobility, though there are, perhaps, some among them, who would boast that they could trace their pedigree from Homer's Grecian heroes. The study of the Greek fathers, in religious controversies and ecclesiastical history, has been in all probability one of the principal causes, why the Greek has obtained so great repute in England, and has been so much cultivated. We owe some very good editions of Greek classics to British scholars ; but they are not so numerous as might be expected, considering the great attention that has been paid to the Greek language in English schools and universities. The Barneses, however, the Clarkes, the Bentleys, the War-

Vol. II. E tons,



tons, the Huntingfords, the Glasses, and many besides, do honour to their country, as one that is famous for Greek literature.

I cannot help making here the same remark on the English pronunciation of the Greek, which I made before, relative to that of the Latin. An Englishman, when reading Greek to a foreigner, who is acquainted with the language, will be as unintelligible to him, and, perhaps, more so, than when he reads Latin. Yet I have met with some of them, who seriously contended, that their pronunciation was the true one, and the same which was in use among the ancient Greeks. It is not worth while seriously to refute an opinion of this kind, when the modern Greeks, with several of whom, and from various parts of Greece, I have conversed, pronounce it exactly as we do. All other learned nations in Europe, in pronouncing the Greek and Latin, differ from the English, who, incontestibly, have adopted a pronunciation of the Latin and Greek vowels, similar to that which is in use in their own language. The Scotch, by pronouncing the vowels broader, and being used to gutturals, approach of course more nearly to that pronunciation, which prevails on the continent.

The Hebrew meets with but few admirers in

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England; and, in the two universities, not a great number will be found who are well versed in it. The Lightfoots, Pocockes, Shaws, Hunts, Lowths, and Kennicots, are scarce. In our Protestant churches in Germany, we cannot be admitted as ministers without understanding Hebrew, as it makes a part of that public examination, which we are to undergo before we enter on the pastoral office. But an English divine has no occasion for Hebrew, which is not required, and makes no part of his examination, previous to his ordination. I confess that this appears to me by far the most rational. Why should we spend so much time, and bestow so much pains, on the learning of a language, which is generally, after the examination is over, neglected and consigned to oblivion? We have translations of the Bible, which are used in our churches; we have commentaries written or compiled by men who were conversant with the original, which we may consult, if we entertain any doubts about the justness of the translation. It is very true, in our universities, we must have men, who understand Hebrew properly, that they may instruct those who wish to learn it; but whoever is not designed for a professor of Hebrew, has no occasion to learn the language, since so

many other things require his time. There are some English, who apply themselves to the Hebrew merely from inclination ; and it may be proved by many instances, that those, who, as *dilettanti*, conquer the difficulties of learning a language, arrive at last to a higher degree of skill than those who regard such business as a drudgery to which they are driven by necessity, because their bread partly depends upon it. Most English, who understand Hebrew, read it without the vowel points, and pronounce it in a very different manner from the Jews, or, from what we are taught in our schools. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to understand them when they read ; and it has appeared to me, as if some would put any vowels to the words which came first uppermost in their minds, merely by guess-work. Some regard those Hebrew letters as vowels, and pronounce them in their own way, which, their true sound being lost, neither we nor the Jews ever read.

Other oriental languages are by no means neglected in England. They are cultivated in both universities, particularly at Oxford, with great success. Dr. Hunt, who was professor of the Arabic, in the last mentioned university some years ago, was a gentleman extremely well versed in that language. The me-

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rits of Dr. White, who published the four Gospels, according to the Syriac version of Philoxenus, are well known; and if sir William Jones returns safely from India, England then may boast of the greatest orientalist of the present century. The learned are also indebted for many very valuable and costly publications, relating to eastern literature, to the university or Clarendon-press at Oxford, which, perhaps, would never have appeared, if it had not been for this famous and noble institution.

The critical art, that which has the sacred writers, as well as that which has the profane authors for its object, was formerly in greater esteem in England than it is at present. The *Critici Sacri*, as well as other commentaries on the Bible, are bought cheap enough, at public sales; and in great libraries, where they are placed, they are not very often disturbed. Even booksellers seem now to be rather shy in undertaking the printing of such works. Some years ago, I undertook, at the intreaty of several learned English gentlemen, to translate Michaelis's *Introductory Lectures on the New Testament*, from the third edition of that work; but, though Dr. Lowth, the then worthy bishop of London, and some other right reverend prelates, were among the first subscribers to this publication, which

besides was supported by several learned friends; and though advertisements announced the undertaking, in Great Britain as well as Ireland; yet, I was not able to procure a sufficient number of subscribers, to defray the expences of printing; and as I could not find a bookseller, who would run the risk himself, I very soon abandoned my intentions.

There have appeared, however, within a few years past, several learned publications, which amply prove, that the *critica sacra*, and those languages and sciences with which it is connected, are by no means laid aside. The Hebrew Bible by Dr. Kennicot; Bishop Lowth's *Prælectiones de sacra Poesi Hebræorum*; his translation of Isaiah; bishop Pearce's Commentary on the Four Evangelists, besides many more of the kind, which have been published even within my time, are sufficient proofs, that the English keep up the renown in this branch of literature, which they have long acquired.

Notwithstanding the great esteem which they entertain for the old Greek and Roman authors, it is somewhat remarkable, that the nation has produced but few good critics, who have deserved well respecting them<sup>s</sup>. We have not

many

<sup>s</sup> This is by no means owing to want of learning, acuteness, judgment, or genius; but rather, perhaps, because

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many excellent editions, particularly of Latin classics, which have been given by English philologists. Of some Greek ancient authors, we owe to them very valuable and elegant editions, with notes that do honour to the editors; but, though there are some Latin classics, printed in England in the most splendid and beautiful manner, so as to be ornaments to great libraries, yet they are generally without any notes. As, therefore, they required only a good copy to be printed from, and a careful corrector of the press, they are rather monuments of the typographical art than of critical skill, or deep learning. A beginning, however, has lately been made, to do justice to the Latin classics,

because they do not think occupations of this kind, of that consequence and value, which many of the learned have done in other countries. I confess, they appear to me not much in the wrong; and there is certainly good sense in what the learned Dr. Middleton wrote to the late bishop of Gloucester, Warburton, when, in his younger days, he had an intention of giving an edition of Velleius Paterculus, with various readings, and some notes. "It is," says he, in his letter, "a laudable and liberal amusement, to try now and then in our reading, the success of conjecture; but in the present state of the generality of old writers, it can hardly be thought a study fit to employ a life upon, at least not worthy, I am sure, of your talents and industry, which, indeed, instead of trifling ~~on~~ words, seem calculated rather to correct the manners and opinions of the world."

in publishing the works of Cicero, at Oxford, in a manner which does honour to the Clarendon press, the editors, and the university. It is a just subject of complaint, that most editions of Latin authors, printed in Great Britain, are very incorrect; some of them, however, such as Mattaire's classics, and the Glasgow editions, are to be excepted. The latter are remarkable for typographical neatness, and a solicitous correctness.

The Dutch editions of the old classics are in great repute in England: they are much sought after, and dearly paid for. Though those editions, which generally go under the denomination of *variorum*, were formerly much blamed, and greatly depreciated<sup>9</sup>, perhaps more than they deserved; they are, notwithstanding, bought at high prices in England, particularly those which are thought to be the best editions. The Dutch quarto editions, by Burmann, Havercamp, Reitzius, Torrenius, and other classical editors, seem to have, even in public auctions, when libraries are sold,

<sup>9</sup> The various opinions entertained of them, are related in Walchii *Hist. Critica Latinæ Linguae*, p. 483, and also by Baillet in his *Jugemens des Savans*, &c. tom. ii. part ii. p. 394. Morhof, in his *Polybistor*. p. 838, judges too severely, when he calls them *Ineptæ variorum editiones*, &c.

their

their fixed price, under which, they are seldom to be bought. I have often wondered to see, how far this predilection for scarce and supposed valuable editions of the classics, is carried by some of the English: it seems to border upon a kind of mania. There are dilettanti, who will pay almost any price for them, merely that they may say they have them in their possession, though they hardly ever make any use of them. I remember, that some years ago, a gentleman died, who had collected the most valuable and scarce editions of Greek and Roman classics, though his knowledge of Latin was much confined, and as to Greek, he could hardly read the characters. His greatest pride was, to be, as long as he lived, the owner of such a classical library, to shew it to strangers who wished to see it, and to tell them, that such a book was scarce, or had cost him so much, or that such another was the best edition. The prices given in public sales, for what are called *editiones principes*, have often astonished me; and I have been tempted to think, that they were not altogether consistent with reason, which, however, with those who are called *dilettanti*, may be out of the question. The first printed editions of the Greek and Roman classics, are, undoubtedly, of great value; when they are printed



printed from good manuscripts, with neatness, exactness, and accuracy, they are equal to manuscripts. But, since it can scarcely be conjectured from what manuscripts, and of what worth, most of them are printed off; and since they have been collated in our best subsequent modern editions, I do not see, why, at present, they should be so much extolled, and such great prices be given for them, except it be on account of their rarity and antiquity. I wish, by all means, to see them in public libraries, as they are so scarce, and difficult to be obtained; but it must excite a smile, to hear a young critic, or an old pedant, when he gets sight of such editions, exclaim, Heavens, what a treasure! Our best modern editions, in many respects, when reason is called in to judge, are superior to such dear *editiones principes*. There are two points only, besides their age, in which some of the former must yield to the latter; the first is, accuracy and correctness; for nothing could exceed the care which was taken in this respect; the other is, the elegance and the neatness of the types. As to usefulness, it cannot be denied that our best modern editions have the superiority on their side. I will, however, say no more on this subject, for fear of incurring the displeasure of the *dilettanti* in these things; and,

and, perhaps, of being called *injustus rerum estimator*, which I am not. I revere these monuments of the typographical art; I know that many of these editions have a great intrinsic value; I admire their neatness and their correctness, and I most sincerely wish, that we had in our days, among the proprietors of considerable printing offices, many who resembled an Aldus Manutius, a Henry and Robert Stephens, a Plantin, a Froben, an Oporin, and others, whose names are yet justly held in high esteem in the republic of letters.

After these general remarks relative to literature, I shall make a few observations on the state of the different branches of science. Those which relate to that which goes under the denomination of Divinity, will be given more amply when I treat on the state of religion. Books which concern religion, are, at present, as I have already mentioned, not so numerous, as they were formerly. The character of this kind of writings is likewise much altered from what it was a century ago, and I may say much for the better. There appear, indeed, publications even now, which breathe the spirit of the ancient controversial writings; and others full of fanatical and enthusiastic ranting;

ranting; but nobody minds them, except those who are of the same way of thinking. Lord Bacon was very much displeased with the theological writings of his countrymen. He said "they were generally diffuse, perplexed, and became, by long digressions in which they abound, very tedious to read. In matters of dispute they were full of chicanery, and the method which was adopted in them was affected and embarrassed." This was certainly more the case formerly, than it has been since the beginning of the present century. The writings of those English divines, who are of note, have been, since that time, thought remarkable for their solidity, their spirit of research, their learning, their candour, and that unaffected method in which they are often written. This praise is bestowed very liberally abroad upon English theological writings; though, in my opinion, the exceptions to be made are pretty numerous. As for those books, which have a reference to morality, the English writers on this subject have been long famous.

The science of the law, or what is called jurisprudence, is so intimately connected with the courts of judicature, and the manner of  
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adminiftring juſtice, of both which I have ſpoken in another place<sup>1</sup>, that I ſhall be very brief in thoſe few obſervations, which I have to add on this ſubject. When the clergy, who had formerly the greateſt ſhare in the adminiſtration of what was called juſtice, quitted the law-courts, and the principal of them, the court of king's bench, was fixed in Weſtminſter-hall, the gentlemen of the law, who before were diſperſed about the kingdom, were now obliged to attend to their buſineſs in London. To facilitate the learning of the common law, and to give young men the opportunity of being inſtructed therein, a kind of colleges, ſomewhat reſembling thoſe in the univerſities, were formed, which go under the name of Inns of Chancery and Inns of Court. Not only lectures on the law were read, but even the degrees of bachelors and doctors of law were conferred, only with this difference from thoſe in the univerſity, that the names were altered; for a bachelor was called a barrifier, and a doctor a ſergeant at law. The ceremony of making a ſergeant is ſuch, that a perſon, who has never ſeen it before, can hardly refrain from laughter. Theſe inns were formerly much more frequent-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 54.

ed, and more respectable than now, when many of the nobility and young men of quality resorted to them. The two English universities, perhaps, looked upon them with not a very favourable eye<sup>2</sup>; and; indeed, I am inclined to think, that those who study the law in a university, make a greater proficiency in it than those who only qualify themselves for practising in the inns of court. The lectures, which are read there, are few, and of no consequence; the exercises which are to be performed, are of so trifling a nature, that a person who attends them merely as a stranger, cannot refrain from wonder and from pity. These Inns being in the middle of London, where dissipation reigns, and bad examples create so much mischief, it is hardly to be expected, that many of the young gentlemen who live in them, and who enjoy all possible liberty, should not fall into a way of life, which is by no means consistent with the intention for which they were placed there. It depends on them, whether they will apply themselves to study or not, and their conduct is left to their own discretion.

<sup>2</sup> Blackstone says: "That a science like this should ever have been deemed unnecessary to be studied in an university, is a matter of astonishment and concern." *Commentaries*, vol. i. p. 27.

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Many, perhaps, will be inclined to think not very favourably of the peaceable disposition of the English, when they are told, that the number of lawyers in England amounts, as it is said, to more than forty thousand. But it ought to be considered, that the English are a commercial nation, and that the disputes concerning *meum* and *tuum*, among people who live by trade and manufactures, are almost infinite. The best laws are made in England; but nowhere are they oftener, if possible, evaded, or more readily and daringly transgressed than here. The philosopher, who knows, that the laws are the principal part of ethics, may exclaim, *quid bonæ leges sine moribus proficiunt!* but the lawyer will ask, How should we live, if they were strictly observed? Besides, as the forms in law-courts, are, if I may use the expression, almost mechanical, many persons who have never studied the law, but only acquired a superficial knowledge of its forms, practise as attorneys. I knew a man, about twenty years ago, who originally by profession was a painter, and practised his art; but, as it did not produce a sufficient income to maintain his family, he practised as an attorney. I believe there are many similar cases, which, in my opinion, may account not only for the great number of lawyers, but be the

the cause, that some of them can hardly support their existence, and therefore, by practices not the most honourable, disgrace their profession. In no country, I believe, are the lawyers the most beloved class of people; and, it seems, that in England they are not much more liked than those in other nations. There are undoubtedly among them, and to my own knowledge, the worthiest and the most respectable characters; but it is suspected, that they do not constitute a majority.

The study of the law is very dry, and many who have entered upon it, found it so dull and tedious, that they soon abandoned it. David Garrick did so; and there is much reason to doubt, whether, in the profession of the law, his talents would ever have acquired him that celebrity and wealth, which he obtained as an actor.

As many great offices of state are to be filled with gentlemen of the law, and counsellors, who are eminent in their profession, easily obtain ample fortunes, and are sometimes raised to high posts under government, it is very natural, that the class of those who practise the law, should be regarded as one of the first in the kingdom. Peerages are often obtained in this profession; and a great part of the nobility owe their

their rise, to ancestors, who from commoners and lawyers, were raised to peers of the realm, and officers of state.

The pleadings in an English court of judicature resemble much those which were in use among the Greeks and Romans of old. Oratorical talents, and rhetorical powers, therefore, can display and exert themselves no where with more freedom and brilliancy than here. But though certainly pleadings may sometimes be heard at an English bar, which would not have disgraced some of the first Grecian or Roman orators, yet the generality are, as the French say, *comme à l'ordinaire*. Most counsellors, in their speeches, are cold and inanimated. They commonly lean upon their down-stretched arms and bent fingers, inclining the body a little forwards; and thus they talk in a low, and often broken voice, repeating perpetually the phrase, my lord, with which they address the judge. Nevertheless, they are well paid; but they must take care to have their hands well filled with guineas by their clients, before they plead; for they cannot send in a bill, or legally demand payment, when their business is over.

Leaving here the science of jurisprudence, I shall make a few observations on the state of



phyfic and medicine. They are founded upon what my own eyes have seen, and what I have learned in conversation with some physicians in London, who might lay claim to some eminence in their art. I am myself no physician, and I entertain of medicine almost the same opinion as Montaigne; what I shall say, therefore, will be confined to general remarks only; which I write down, not for physicians, but for any reader, who, not having been in England, wishes to inform himself, in some measure, on this subject.

It is said, that the universities of Oxford and Cambridge are not calculated for good schools of Esculapius; that though, perhaps, the professors in phyfic are men of medical knowledge, yet their lectures are too few and too insufficient. The salaries, which they receive, are fixed, and consequently they are not so solicitous about the number and applause of those who frequent their lectures, as the professors of Edinburgh, or other Scotch universities, whose rewards and income greatly depend on their skill, their industry, and the number of their pupils. Besides, it is objected to the two English universities, that they have not clinical lectures like those at Edinburgh, which are said to be the best schools for instructing young stu-

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 67

dents in the medical art. There is, indeed, a similar institution at Oxford, in the Radcliffe infirmary; but it is pretended that it is by no means equal to those in the Scotch universities. I remember, that other objections of this nature have been urged against the two English universities, during disputes which have subsisted between the licentiates and fellows belonging to the college in Warwick-lane. This college I have already mentioned, as to the building, in another place; and I shall add here a few observations relative to its origin, which may be traced as far back as the reign of Henry the Eighth. The necessity of keeping those, who would practise as physicians in London, under a proper inspection, was but then first thought of; and it is a subject of surprize, that this was not attended to centuries before. It was ordered about the year 1512, that no person, within seven miles from London, under a penalty of five pounds, should practise physic, without being licensed by the bishop of London, or the dean of St. Paul's. Whoever applied to these ecclesiastics for a licence, was, before he obtained it, to be examined by four physicians and as many surgeons. When the utility of this new regulation was observed, a certain number of physicians

obtained, in 1519, a royal charter, by which they were made a corporation, and invested with several privileges. Four of them were to be chosen annually, to examine those who wished to act as physicians in London; and the college was empowered to fine, or even imprison, those who practised without a licence, or who acted contrary to those rules which were judged requisite for good physicians. This corporation is the same which bears the name of the College of Physicians, and assigns for the true date of its existence the year 1523. It has good revenues, which arise from donations and legacies. Those who wish to write prescriptions, and feel the pulse of patients, under the authority of the college, are to pay for their examination fifty pounds. Physicians thus examined, are called Licentiates, and out of their number the fellows of the college are chosen. According to the charter, the fellows of this college must have studied in one of the two English universities. This regulation has, even within my time, produced great animosities and disputes. Attempts to obtain admission into the college, for licentiates educated at other universities, have

<sup>3</sup> The late Mr. Foote, in his play of *The Devil upon Two Sticks*, has made very merry with these examinations.

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been made even by a kind of force; but without any effect.

Though a physician may have acquired the best knowledge of the medical art, in Scotch, Dutch, or other universities; and though he may have undergone an examination before the members of the college, with great honour and credit; yet he cannot aspire to a higher degree than that of licentiate. He is to renounce forever the hope of partaking, *de jure*, of those elegant and epicurean dinners, given in the ornamented hall of the college, where the golden rules of diet are not inscribed, or to be seen among the decorations. The displeasure which this limitation, and this exclusion from fellowships creates, has occasioned sometimes quarrels, and scenes which have produced matter of merriment and satire, expressed in ludicrous prints, caricatures, and pamphlets.

Notwithstanding the care which is taken to prevent unlicensed people from practising physic, London and its environs are full of them. Even publicly quacks, mounted on a stage, and surrounded by patients, are to be seen in open places, such as Moorfields, or Covent-garden. The college of physicians has lately published, under the authority of government, a

Pharmacopœia<sup>4</sup> of great merit; but the number of nostrums, which are perpetually advertised in daily papers, is nevertheless very great. That the sale of these quack medicines is very extensive and profitable, is manifest from these numerous advertisements, which must be attended with great expence, and be deducted out of the profits. Nay, the inventors, or proprietors, of such nostrums, are not satisfied with filling the English newspapers, with the praise of them; but even our German, the French, the Dutch, and other foreign gazettes, abound with their encomiums. This plainly proves, that foreigners are disposed, as well as the English, to believe in the efficacy of these quackeries, particularly when, as is frequently the case, they come recommended with a king's patent. Very few people abroad have the least idea of the nature of such patents, or of the ease with which they are obtained. They believe, that, under royal authority, these medicines are examined by skilful physicians, and that, after having undergone a strict trial of their efficacy, their excellence is stamped with such royal certificate.

<sup>4</sup> Pharmacopœia Collegii regalis Medicorum Londinensis.  
1788. 4to.

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The notion, too often entertained abroad, that physicians, who practise in London, acquire very soon, and with much ease, great fortunes, is not founded in truth. I am rather inclined to think, that the old saying, *Dat Galenus opes*, admits no where of more exceptions, even with regard to learned and skilful physicians, than in London. It has happened, indeed, that a sir Hans Sloane, a Mead, a Radcliffe, a Fothergill, and some others whom I could mention, have amassed great wealth; but these instances are not very common; and, among a hundred physicians, perhaps there is not more than one, who meets with such good luck; and this, sometimes, is more the result of accident, of particular circumstances, or of whim and fashion, than of eminent skill or learning. I have heard mentioned a kind of physicians, called by some *bon ton* doctors, who, as it is said, gain much money, not, as it is pretended, by eminence and superior knowledge of their profession, but by means of accommodating themselves, their prescriptions, and their conversations, to the taste of their either real or imaginary patients. I am of opinion, that the reason why so many physicians, particularly in London, are without much business, is to be looked for in the largeness of the fees, which

they either expect, or which are established by custom. I remember that the most eminent physicians at Hamburgh, who kept their carriages, and thus visited their patients, had no more for each visit than a *mark*, which amounts to sixteen pence sterling; and the utmost given by rich and generous persons, was, now and then, half a crown. But in London a physician, when he is called in for assistance, and writes a prescription, though, perhaps, but a mere palliative, expects a guinea for his fee, if not two. Should the illness of the patient be of a long duration, he is, perhaps, satisfied, with taking a fee only every other visit. In dangerous cases, if it be required that one or two more physicians are to be called in, for the sake of a consultation between them, to relieve the patient either one way or the other, they expect, as I have been informed, three, and sometimes five guineas each, for their trouble. This being the case, it may easily be supposed, that most people, without knowing that Hippocrates himself gave the wholesome advice *πεινὴν ἰατρῇ*, will, for the sake of saving expences, avoid the physicians as long as they can. In London, therefore, and in all England, the apothecary is the first to whom the patient applies, after he has tried what are called family remedies, or,

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perhaps, made himself worse, by using some nostrums. The apothecary, indeed, does not expect fees like the doctor, but his bill for powders, pills, and draughts, which he sends in after the recovery, or happy decease of the patient, amounts sometimes to almost as much as the fees of the doctor. Should the disorder of the patient, after a little time, discover some dangerous symptoms, the regular bred physician is then called in for assistance; oftentimes merely that the patient may leave the world *secundum artem*. It is likewise said, though I do not vouch for the truth of it, that the apothecary sometimes will go hand in hand with the doctor. The former, it is pretended, with an air of gravity and sorrow, will inform either the patient himself, or his friends, that his own skill is exhausted, and that his powers are become too feeble to conquer the increasing disorder; and, therefore, that it would be adviseable to call in the aid of a physician. If it happens, that the patient is either not acquainted with an able physician, or has no particular attachment to any, the apothecary knows a very worthy and respectable physician, who would do his utmost for the relief of the much-to-be pitied patient, and his distressed friends or family. The doctor is, of course, introduced by the apothecary;

and



and the former, out of gratitude to the latter, will sometimes, it is said, though this appears to me hardly probable, prescribe liberally for the benefit of his recommending friend, and more, perhaps, than the weak stomach of the patient, or his purse, can well bear.

When I first came to England, a large full bottomed and well powdered wig, a sword, and a cane, generally with a golden head, were reckoned among the essential requisites of a physician, and without which he could not be entitled to confidence. He was to approach the sick bed with an air of gravity, and a slow pace; and, after having seated himself by its side, he was to ask the patient some questions leaning with his upper lip on the head of his cane, and casting his eyes thoughtfully on the ground. Prescriptions were to be written with the appearance of deep meditation. But as fashion prevails even in the materia medica, and influences prescriptions and remedies, so it has extended its power over the physicians themselves, and their external appearance. The venerable wigs, the silver-hilted swords, and the gold-headed canes, were thrown aside; and the old and young London Esculapius's, seemed to be at once wholly metamorphosed; a few old,

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old, grave, solid, and solemn doctors excepted<sup>s</sup>. The others appeared in their own hair, tied in a handsome bag; with a brilliant ring on their finger, carefully displayed when they felt the pulse of their patients; and, after asking a few questions, rather in a cheerful manner, not to frighten the sick, they sat down to write a prescription, with so much ease and celerity, as if they had been long ago acquainted with the state of the disorder, with the constitution of the patient, and with the most certain remedies to restore him to health. I shall only observe, that an apothecary, after the decease of the patient, may not only send in his bill, but even, in case of non-payment, enforce it in a legal way. This a physician cannot do; he must take care to get paid, whilst the state of the patient renders him necessary, for his demands will not be supported in a court of judicature.

Some years ago, very laudable charities were instituted, under the denomination of Dispensaries, supported by the voluntary contributions of annual subscribers. A physician, chosen by them, and rewarded with a small salary, gives

<sup>s</sup> It should be remembered, that this was written in 1782; at present, a proper dress prevails among the medical gentlemen in London.

advise gratis to the poor afflicted with illness, when they come recommended by a subscriber to the dispensary; and in case they are confined by their disorder, he visits them in their habitations. The medicines that are prescribed are given, gratis, to the poor, by an apothecary who is likewise chosen by the subscribers, and being endowed with a small stipend, his shop is supported also from the money subscribed. Such charities as these are, undoubtedly, highly commendable; and are proofs of the good intentions, and humane disposition, of a part of the English nation, which can afford to give relief to the distressed poor.

It has been said of English physicians, that, in their prescriptions, they are more for powerful, or rather violent medicines than moderate. An eminent English physician observed to me, that their *materia medica* contains more chemical than Galenical preparations, because the former are stronger. For this very reason, he thought that the method of French physicians, in curing disorders, was far less efficacious than the English, because the former, in their pharmacy are more for Galenicals than chemicals. A German physician resident in London, who is eminent in the medical art, has assured me, that a greater quantity of laudanum, and more opiates,  
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are prescribed by English physicians in London within a twelvemonth, than in all Germany for many years together.

England, it cannot be denied, has produced very eminent physicians, and such as have greatly promoted the medical art by their learning and science. Even now I could mention gentlemen in this line, who are still living, and who do honour to their profession, not only as men of superior medical knowledge and abilities, but likewise as men of excellent and amiable characters.

The surgeons in England were, till the year 1745, upon the same footing as ours in Germany; they were both barbers and surgeons. At that time, however, they became two separate bodies, and the surgeons were made a corporation and a company by themselves. According to the charter of this company, nobody should practise surgery, within seven miles of London, except he be examined and licensed by the company. Notwithstanding this regulation, many, I believe, practise, without having undergone an examination, or received a licence. The company has a fine hall in the Old Bailey, with an anatomical theatre, where those are dissected, who are hanged for murder.

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England, and particularly London, has eminent and renowned surgeons; but, the majority, I believe, are not intitled to much commendation. The numerous hospitals, the army and the navy, are most excellent schools to breed good surgeons; though, at the same time, they are apt to render some of them destitute of compassion, and to make them forget the dictates of humanity towards the unhappy objects who stand in need of their assistance. During the winter time, anatomical lectures are frequently announced in public prints, and read by eminent men in the profession. Dead bodies being with difficulty to be procured for dissection, a set of people, called in the London-phraseology Resurrection-men, clandestinely dig up some of the recently buried bodies; and though there is a severe punishment inflicted upon those who are convicted of robbing the church-yards, yet they venture for the sake of a small gain to bring those bodies under the anatomical knife, which, by the surviving relations, are supposed to rest quietly in the graves in which they were interred.

The British philosophical writings, even the very modern ones, are well known with us in Germany; and, therefore, I need not be minute on this branch of literature. The manner  
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of teaching, in the two English universities, what is called in the schools philosophy, is, as I shall shew afterwards, rather unphilosophical. But such old Gothic and scholastic institutions are not the rules by which the state of philosophy in England is to be judged. Ever since experimental philosophy has been pursued by unremitting industry, the manner of philosophizing has happily received a very different turn. Locke has applied it successfully to logic and metaphysics, and Newton has done it with the same advantage in his pursuits and works. It has also been of the greatest service in those parts of philosophy which relate to ethics and to the nature of man. The British writers are the first, who, in this respect, opened the way for truth. Real philosophy is to teach us the principles of our knowledge, and how its different branches are related and connected; by a careful observation of effects which are perceived by our senses, it is to lead us to the finding out their causes; and by comparing the causes, we are to conclude what the effects of them will be. It, therefore, should long ago have been discovered, that the way of observations and experiments, and not the constructing of artificial, tottering, and ill-founded systems, to which we are too much still addicted in Germany,

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is the only means of finding out and adhering to truth. Since the English have set an example of this kind of philosophy, morality, at least theoretically, has gained by it. The way has been opened of reasoning and of writing on legislation, government, finances, commerce, and other important subjects, philosophically and under the guidance of sound sense, much more than it used to be formerly. History has been restored to its true dignity, so as to become, as lord Bolingbroke expresses it, philosophy teaching by examples; nay, all kinds of sciences seem to be regenerated and enlivened by this spirit of philosophy, which is not given to erecting systematically castles in the air, but to a just way of reasoning from facts, from careful observations, and proper experiments. How much does the republic of letters, in this respect, owe to Great-Britain! I am, however, almost inclined to think, that some modern French philosophical writers, have trod this way of arriving at truth, with more boldness and success,<sup>6</sup> than many British authors of the same class. But, though a few of the French nation

<sup>6</sup> This assertion is now strongly confirmed by the late revolution in France, which, in a great measure, is to be attributed to those writers, which I had in view, when I wrote this, more than seven years ago.

## LEARNING IN GENERAL. 81

have shewn themselves great in theory; yet the English have this preference, that they, as to the greatest part, have already long ago practised and reaped the benefit of those principles, which a few of the French have advanced only in their writings.

Notwithstanding the praise which is due to the English, on account of their promoting experimental philosophy, and the great service which by their writings they have done to learning, it can hardly be thought, that the manner in which this kind of philosophy is, at present, by some pursued, is consistent with its dignity, or that it can be productive of the utility which might otherwise be expected. Almost every one, who now claims the title of a philosopher, pretends to be conversant in natural history, though, in fact, many resemble only the virtuoso Nicholas Gimcrack, who, under the motto of *nugis addere pondus*, is recorded, with his last will, in the Tatler<sup>7</sup>. Their time is spent in real trifles, and they hunt after fame in pretended discoveries, which, far from being of any importance, are only children's amusements in a different shape. It is the fashion to classify the different kingdoms of nature, as they are called,

<sup>7</sup> Vol. iv. No. 216.



and to build systems. This, indeed, is very useful, and even necessary, but there are many who style themselves natural philosophers, who think that in this consists the whole science of nature, and that it is nothing but a mere vocabulary, which employs only the memory, leaving the understanding unoccupied; priding themselves on being engaged in the noble study of nature, though they are doing nothing that has any tendency to produce the least benefit to society.

Chemistry has been cultivated, for some years past, with great success in England. Dr. Watson, the present bishop of Landaff, and Mr. Kirwan, have particularly signalized themselves in this branch of science, by their writings. The latter has even successfully applied himself to the learning of the German language, that he might be able to read our books written upon this science, which, I believe, is almost the only one in which the English have hitherto allowed us any eminence.

The British writers in moral philosophy are undoubtedly of great merit, and they are very well known in our country. They, however, grow, at present, fewer in number, and, as some pretend, less in intrinsic value. Good moral periodical publications, and such as tend to pro-  
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mote virtue, appear not so frequently as formerly; and many of the old ones may be said to be nearly consigned to oblivion: The Spectator, Guardian, Tatler, and other similar productions, which were formerly highly esteemed, are now, at public sales, bought at a cheap rate. Whoever meets them in family book-cases, may, in most instances, suppose that the owners look upon them as publications which suited the taste of their ancestors very well, to pass an idle hour with; but that they are now out of fashion, because genteel people, at present, know better how to spend their time, by going to assemblies, and other places of entertainment, by sitting down to the card-table, or following amusements of different kinds. The romances of a Richardson, a Fielding, and others, which were formerly in high repute, begin to be laid aside, as books which make the reader soon sleepy; and the rather, since almost every week new romances, in two or more little pocket volumes, are published in London, which are written with so much ease, and are so entertaining, because they correspond so much with the manners and the fashions of the present age. The works of Lord Shaftesbury, which went formerly through so many elegant editions, which contain so much truth and excellence;

which represent virtue in so amiable a light, are now almost forgotten. Lord Shaftesbury's principle, that virtue is desirable for its own sake, does not altogether agree with that predominant propensity to luxury and sensuality, which cannot be so easily satisfied, on account of the accumulating taxes and dearness of living. Every one cries, *virtus post nummos*, and very few can form an idea of disinterested virtue. The fate which has attended Lord Shaftesbury's writings, in regard to a natural instinct to virtue, has likewise befallen those of a Hutcheson, recommending the beauty of virtue, and a proper direction of the passions. The latter, perhaps, still meet with some admirers, in the poorer and barren parts of Scotland, where indigence has somewhat preserved the purity of manners, and where virtue, consequently, has not met with so many impediments. During the first years of my residence in England, what is called *sentimental*, was the hobby-horse of many moral writers, and of such persons, as pretended to have finer feelings, and tenderer moral nerves, than others, though they contradicted it frequently by their actions. The public, however, grew tired of this, as of all other things; and many persons of both sexes may now be seen, smiling with a kind of contempt, though

though often without reason, and very little to their honour, at every thing which appears to them to come under the denomination of sentimental.

Mathematics are still, and deservedly, in that high repute, in which they have stood in England for so many years, and Euclid is, as formerly, the chief guide. The merits of the English in regard to these sciences are indisputable; and Newton's name is known over half the globe. Even in these modern times a MacLaurin, a Simpson, a Smith, a Ferguson, and others, are become famous for their mathematical knowledge. Mathematical instruments are nowhere made to greater perfection than in England. They are exported to all countries where learning is cultivated; and it struck me when I observed, that the best telescopes, and other mathematical instruments, in the royal observatory at Paris, were of English fabrication. The greatest improvements of microscopes, electrical machines, and telescopes, we owe to the English; though our countryman, Herschel, in regard to the latter, has now gone farther than any one before him.

It is but of late years that England has produced any historians of note; though, perhaps, even now it may be said, that the Scotch have

the superiority. Burnet, Hume, Robertson, and some other modern historians, who have gained reputation by their historical writings, are Scotchmen. England, however, has some to boast of likewise; and, among others, Lord Littleton's History of Henry the Second, as well as Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, are monuments, which will do credit to the English historical Muse for many years to come. The Universal History, which is translated into our language, and augmented with many new quarto volumes, has certainly its merit; but it is not so much admired in England as it seems to be with us in Germany,

In regard to ecclesiastical history, the English were formerly in greater repute than they are at present. Dr. Jortin, I believe, may be considered as the last, whose writings on this branch of science are of eminence. Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, which, some years ago, was translated into English, has met with uncommon success; but most of our other modern writers on this subject, which are of merit, are unknown in this country.

The famous Dictionary of Bayle, has been the means of introducing into England a great taste for biography. It has been not only trans-

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translated into English, but has even given rise to a similar work, under the title of *Biographia Britannica*, a second edition of which, with great additions, is now publishing. The learned editors spare no pains to make its merit far exceed the first; but as they cannot call their time so much their own, and have not so much leisure upon their hands, as those who are provided with prebends or sinecures of considerable emolument, the progress of the work is by no means equal to the wishes of those who want to see it soon completed, by the able hands which are now employed about it. Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* are undoubtedly a valuable biographical work, though there are some persons who think, that they are written with too much prolixity, and too little candour and accuracy. Biographies were formerly not very common in England, but at present hardly a person of any note in society, or an author little above mediocrity, can depart this life, or a criminal of some notoriety be executed, but he has instantly more than one biographer, who wishes to edify the survivors by writing his life in a magazine, in a pamphlet, or even in a whole volume.

Geography owes much to the English; particularly as they, by their sea voyages and new

discoveries, have greatly contributed towards enlarging the knowledge of the globe. Their accounts of voyages, when they are published, are generally very good. The British travellers are commonly cool observers, who do not stare with surprize and admiration, at every thing they meet with new, nor do they prefer every spot on the earth to their own country. They, therefore, relate what they have seen in the manner in which it really presented itself; though, indeed, there are some who will exaggerate and embellish their accounts, at the expence of truth, claiming the privilege of travellers, and requiring allowance to be made for what they relate. Englishmen who have travelled, or who have informed themselves by reading and conversation, are pretty well informed of the state of other countries; though even among the former, as I have before observed in another place, many exceptions are to be made. As for the bulk of the nation, I believe, that the generality even of those who have received what might be called a superior education, are much uninformed in matters relating to any other parts of the globe, except that little spot in their own country, which they have seen with their own eyes. The want of this species of knowledge I have frequently observed, in a most laugh,

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laughable degree, in English newspapers; nay it has sometimes shewn itself among the speakers in the British senate.

As to what relates to the study of antiquity, I shall speak of that more amply, when I give an account of the Antiquarian Society. One remark, however, I cannot help making here, which is, that, as the English have brought so many remains of antiquity, at great expence, from Italy, Greece, Egypt, Asia, and other parts of the world to their island, it is rather remarkable, that they have but few learned antiquaries among their writers. Potter, of whom we have the *Antiquities of Greece*; Prideaux, Pococke, and Chandler, who is the editor of the *Marmora Oxoniensia* and of the *Ionian Antiquities*, are all learned men, much to be esteemed; but England cannot yet boast of a Montfaucon.

Eloquence is much cultivated and esteemed in England; and yet I think it has by no means risen to that degree of perfection, which might naturally have been expected; since the incitements, and opportunities for it, are nowhere greater, and more frequent, than in this island. Pulpit eloquence in England is not very brilliant, or calculated to excite great admiration. In the established church, it is generally moral  
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doctrine, dressed in cold logic, which is read with a kind of monotony, without animation, without any appearance of zeal in the preacher, and commonly in a very low voice. Besides many, though they have their notes close before their eyes, read in a most timorous manner, as if they saw the instruments of punishment before them, which were in use at the rhetorical exercises at Lyons in France instituted by Caligula, to which Juvenal alludes in that well known line :

. . . Lugdunensem rhetor dicturus ad aram.

There are, indeed, some excellent compositions for the pulpit, such as those of a Tillotson, a Sherlock, and in modern times a Blair; but their excellence consists more in the elegance of expression, and the purity of language, in which they are written, than in that ravishing eloquence, which not only addresses the understanding, but awakens the passions, and goes directly to the heart. The French, in my opinion, have greater orators among their clergy than the English, who cannot boast of a Bossuet, a Flechier, a Bourdaloue, a Massillon, or a Saurin. Addison complained in his time, that the clergy of his nation were not possessed of the exterior qualities of an orator; they stand, he says, in the pulpit like blocks, and will hardly

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move a finger, to enforce the doctrines which they preach. Whoever has studied the fathers of eloquence, and read the third book of Cicero on the Orator, or the eleventh of Quintilian, will rather hesitate before he pronounces favourably on such kind of pulpit eloquence. There are, indeed, among some enthusiastic English preachers, many, who run into the other extreme; they bawl like madmen, and gesticulate in the pulpit, in a manner which certainly cannot promote devotion; but neither their exterior deportment, nor the interior quality of their discourses, are such as come before the tribunal of eloquence; for they are both, in general, beneath all criticism.

The eloquence at the bar, and in parliament, is far superior; but considering the frequent opportunities which occur, and the various and important subjects which offer themselves there, for practising the rhetorical art, and displaying the power of eloquence, it is rather surprising, that it is not carried to greater perfection. Some speeches which I have heard at the bar, and in parliament, were, indeed, excellent, and master-pieces of oratory, quite in the spirit of a Cicero or a Demosthenes; but they are not very frequent. There are counsellors at the bar, and speakers in parliament, whose delivery is animated,

ed, and their action suitable to the subject of which they are treating; but with the generality it is the reverse. Very few speak with that fire and energy, which, as we are told by ancient writers, distinguished the principal orators of Athens or of Rome.

How much the talent of speaking publicly is esteemed and cultivated in England, may be seen by the many debating societies, which at different times have been established in London. The subjects to be debated on in these societies are various, though mostly political, and are often announced in the public papers several days before the debate takes place. There were even, some years ago, theological debating clubs, where all kinds of people, cobblers and butchers, had a right to dispute upon intricate matters of faith and subtle points of divinity, certainly not to promote religious knowledge, edification, charity, and toleration. This nuisance, however, became so flagrant, that a stop was put to it. In some of these societies I have observed much decorum and regularity. It cannot be expected, that in so motley an assembly as these societies sometimes are, the speakers should be always well informed of the subject upon which they presume to give their opinion, or that their arguments should be delivered in  
such

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such a manner as to afford much evidence of their rhetorical talents. I have, however, sometimes been entertained, and even surprized by speakers, who, when they arose, did not promise much. When the subject of debate happens to be political, speakers and orators start up in great plenty; but when it relates to the sciences, there is rather a scarcity. I happened once to be present in one of the principal societies of this kind, where the question to be debated was, Whether it required more talents to write a comedy, or a tragedy? The assembly was sufficiently numerous; but the speakers were very few, and those who delivered their opinion, seemed to be much unacquainted with the subject. One man only, who, by his apron and his strait hair, which he wore, betrayed that fortune had not been favourable to him, spoke with fluency, and with so much good sense, delivered with natural eloquence, that it pleased me much. But, though he excelled the other speakers, who were dressed like gentlemen; yet he shewed, that he had thought very little on the subject, and perhaps had never read any thing relating to it. The eloquence and the powers of speaking, in these societies, appear never more brilliant, nor is the number of orators ever greater, than when the  
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subject of the debate happens to be the favorite topic of the English, marriage and women: Every one of those present, who is in the least inclined to entertain the company with a speech, becomes animated; and though, perhaps his beard has hardly begun to sprout forth, is as wise and as eloquent as Homer's Nestor could be,

Τὸ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέει αὐδῆ:

Accidentally, to please a friend, I went with him to one of these debating societies, where the question to be debated was, Whether it was more adviseable to marry an old maid or a widow? What a mellifluous strain of eloquence was there to be heard from old and young! All seemed to be animated by the presence of many female hearers; when, after a long and spirited debate, the widows came off victorious.

In the year 1779, the attempts for the promotion of eloquence went so far, as to give even the female sex an opportunity of improving and displaying publicly those gifts and powers of their tongues, with which nature has so bountifully endowed them. This rhetorical school received a French name, and was called *la belle assemblée*, though all the declamations were in English. It was held once a week, in the evening,

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ing, and the admittance into the room where it was kept, cost four times as much as in other debating societies. I was once present, when the subject of debate was, Whether a country life was preferable to a town life? There were about ten who spoke from the galleries, and the first two or three who had masks on, appeared to have learned their speeches by heart, and were perhaps actresses, to set the debate a-going. Others harangued afterwards without masks, and some delivered their sentiments extremely well. One, I am pretty certain, spoke, as it is called, extempore, and much to the purpose. Another, who, I believe, was never in want of words at a tea table, or in sight of the curtains, attempted several times to speak; but was as often obliged to stop, and at last to give it up. This *belle assemblée*, however, did not last long, and another school for orators was opened, which was to represent the house of commons. The illusion that attended this imitation was carried to a high degree, indeed. The appearance of the room, the representation of the speaker, and of the ministerial and opposition party, the subjects of their debates, the warmth with which they were carried on, and the manner in which the speakers expressed themselves, was entirely in the style of the house of com-

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mons. But this curious institution was of a short duration. Some of the speakers who were bred to the law, or had received a proper education, did, after they had once or twice shewn their talents, not appear any more in their seats, and the debates became of course very imperfect. Besides, the spectators in the galleries were not numerous enough to defray the necessary expences, which attended such a kind of entertainment, and this mock parliament could not impose taxes and great sums of money for its own support. It was, however, a good school for orators; and it might have been far more so, if the subjects had not referred to the dry politics of the day, but had rather been chosen from ancient history, and the topics been such as engaged formerly the Greek orators, or those in the senate and the forum at Rome. It is said, that members of parliament, who shone afterwards in the house of commons, have delivered the first fruits of their eloquence at the shrine of a Robinhood.

The state of poetry in England is well known with us in Germany, where some of the English poets are reprinted in the original, and others, with Johnson's Lives of the Poets, are translated into our language. It is said of the English poets, that they are more eminent for  
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ius than taste, more distinguished for spirit  
fire, and for strength and force, than for  
but respecting this I will decide nothing.  
s only I shall observe, that those who think  
this island has not at present any good  
ts, are much mistaken. Many times have I  
nd foreigners exclaim, The glory of English  
try is past, there are no more Miltons,  
es, Youngs, or Thomsons! Generally such  
ended connoisseurs of British literature,  
e over with a conceit that they are tho-  
ghly acquainted with all its branches, though  
act they know very little of it. They are  
erfectly informed of what it was fifty years  
, and still more imperfectly of what it is at  
ent. I will not say, that the encomiums  
ch are bestowed upon the poets just now  
tioned, have exhausted all the topics of pane-  
c in such a manner, that nothing is left for  
e who come after them; but this I will as-  
that to many modern English poets, and  
r poetical talents, more justice would have  
n done, if the former had not previously  
n possession of so much praise as they really  
e. However, as posterity generally judges  
more impartiality, when the heat of enthu-  
n is past, than the contemporaries are  
stomed to do, so it seems to me, as if the  
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English themselves begin to lower the tone in which those poets were formerly spoken of. Milton, atleast, who was almost put upon an equality with any of the Greek or Roman most renowned poets, seems to lose ground. Lord Chesterfield, who, in his time, was at the head of what the French call *beaux esprits*, writes to his son in this manner: "But what will you say, when I tell you truly, that I cannot possibly read our countryman Milton through. I acknowledge him to have some sublime passages, some prodigious flashes of light, but then you must acknowledge that light is often followed by *darkness visible*, to use his own expression. Besides, not having the honour of being acquainted with any of the parties in his poem, except the man and the woman, the characters and speeches of a dozen or two of angels, and of as many devils, are as much above my reach as my entertainment. Keep this secret for me, for if it should be known, I should be abused by every tasteless pedant, and every solid divine in England?"

Within a few years past, several poets have died in this island, who cannot be considered as much inferior to those before mentioned. Gray's

— Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son. Letter cclix. vol. iii. p. 370.

*Elegy*

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*Elegy written in a Country Church-yard*, is thought by Englishmen, who may be esteemed good judges in such matters, to be equal to any of the elegies of the ancients, of an Ovid or a Tibullus. His odes are equally esteemed. Akenfide's Poem, *the Pleasures of Imagination*, is by some supposed to be one of the best which has been written in the English language. Mason wrote, besides many other valuable pieces, a *Monody on the Death of Pope*, which many think Pope himself could not have surpassed. Glover's *Leonidas* is an heroic poem, much known, and more esteemed in Germany, than here in England itself, where it seemed to begin to be consigned to oblivion, even before its author died. Goldsmith was a poet of fine feelings and fine imagination, whose versification is easy and harmonious. His *Deserted Village* and his *Traveller* have, in my opinion, much poetical and moral merit. Mr. Hayley, Dr. Joseph Warton, and his brother Thomas Warton, to whom we are indebted for *The History of English Poetry*, are poets, who in England are thought to be possessed of considerable merit. The English Muse, within these thirty years, has particularly signalized herself in satirical compositions, and Churchill ought to be placed at the head of the English poets of this

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kind. His satirical lash was almost as much dreaded as that of Peter Aretine, who used to boast of his, that he put even princes, by its menace, under a kind of tribute. It is to be regretted, that Churchill's poems, which are written so much in point, so bitter, and in such smooth and flowing numbers, are, as satires, too local and too personal, so that even now they can hardly be understood without a commentary. Since Pope published his translation of Homer, England has produced poets, who, by their translations in metre, have acquired fame. Grainger's *Tibullus* and West's *Pindar* are deemed to be of decided merit; and Hoole's *Tasso* is, in regard to versification, pronounced, by some, to be equal to that of Pope. This age has even produced many English poetesses, such as a Seward, a Smith, a Williams, a Carter, a Barbauld, a More, who, whilst I am writing this, are still living, and possessed of acknowledged merit.

How fond the English are of making verses, may be seen from the monthly poetical productions in each of the Magazines, where many appear as poets, of whom the same may be said, that Horace pronounces upon many in his time,

Non homines, non Di, non concessere columnæ.

There is hardly any daily newspaper, in which a small room, under the denomination of Poet's Corner, &c. is not assigned to the makers of verses; to gratify readers, who are delighted with reading rhimes, let them be of whatever kind they will.

During my residence in London, two strange meteors have appeared in the English poetical atmosphere; I mean the poems of *Ossian* by Mr. Macpherson, and Rowley's *Poems* by Chatterton. I believe that, at present, among the learned Britons, who are in the least acquainted with these pretended relics of old poetry, few will be found, who are not convinced, that the pretended connoisseurs were as much taken in by these publications, as Scaliger formerly was by those few verses of Muretus, which he, according to his arrogated scent of antiquity, declared to be remnants of the old poet, *Trabea*<sup>s</sup>. Those, indeed, who endeavoured to defend the ingenious fiction of Macpherson, and the poetry of Chatterton, which, as it is supposed by some, was compiled, in great measure, from Bailey's Dictionary, have exposed themselves not a little. Dr. Johnson, when he was asked, Whether he thought any person

<sup>s</sup> Dictionnaire de Bayle, tom. iv. Art. *Trabea*, Rem. A.

now living, could have written such a poem as Ossian? is said to have replied, with his usual roughness "Yes, fir, many men, many women, many children."

It is time for me to conclude this general view of the State of Literature in England. I am well aware, that much is wanted to render it more perfect; but I shall content myself, with adding only a short account of those societies, which are instituted for the advancement of learning, and with a few observations relative to public libraries.

## THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

**T**HIS learned Society has contributed, undoubtedly, much towards the promotion of true and useful knowledge; and it is, perhaps, among all societies of this kind, the first and the most eminent. Since such institutions have taken place, the eyes of men are somewhat more opened. Ill founded hypotheses, and systems, built upon them, began to be thrown aside. Nature was more carefully inquired into, and experiments of various sorts were made. From these two sources, inferences were drawn. Human knowledge, which otherwise is so much confined, became more enlarged; truth and error were now better distinguished, and many, who followed this new method of searching after knowledge, shewed more modesty in judging, and left off speaking in a decisive tone. By this they distinguished themselves from the bulk of those, who are called learned, and from those, who, under a supposed divine authority, are fond of speaking in a dictatorial manner, and of persecuting those,

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who are not inclined to adopt their opinions. The true philosopher finds, by such researches, his understanding strengthened, and his mind composed and tranquil. He reveres the hints, which nature gives him, when he is enquiring after truth, and particularly that which concerns ethics or morality.

I do not introduce this as an enthusiastical admirer of that society of which I am speaking; but I mention it rather with a view of previously declaring, that I am acquainted with its merits, and know how to value them; though, at the same time, sincerity and a regard to truth will oblige me to say a few things, which do not come under the denomination of praise.

In the year 1645, some learned men in London agreed to meet once a week, and to have a conversation upon philosophical and mathematical subjects. Dr. Wallis, Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Goddard, Samuel Forster, professor of astronomy in Gresham college, and Theodore Haak, a German from the Palatinate, may be considered as the first who gave rise to the institution of the Royal Society. These gentlemen used to meet sometimes at the house of Dr. Goddard in Woodstreet, because he had a glass-grinder with him; sometimes at professor Forster's, in Gresham college.

lege. They very wisely laid it down as one of their principal laws, that all political questions and debates should be entirely excluded from their conversation, when they met; and instead of them natural philosophy, geometry, astronomy, mathematical sciences, chemistry, navigation, and mechanical arts should be the topics of discourse.

Some time after the society was in danger of being entirely dissolved, because many of its members, particularly Dr. Wilkins and Dr. Wallis, quitted it, and fixed their residence elsewhere, on account of the public commotions and troubles, which then prevailed in the kingdom. However, towards the latter end of the year 1660, several of the old members, when public tranquillity was restored, assembled again, and soon erected a society more numerous and more respectable than the former. They met at the College of Physicians, in Warwick-lane, and consisted of fifty-five members. It was then resolved, that whoever became a member of the society, should be elected by at least one and twenty votes, and his character should be scrutinized into, unless he were a noble lord, which appears rather a singular exception to be made by philosophers. It was likewise resolved, that every member should pay a shilling weekly to  
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the treasurer of the society, and ten shillings for entrance, which latter expence was afterwards raised to two guineas, and it is now five. For the weekly shillings, or two pounds twelve shillings annually, the members receive the Philosophical Transactions, as they are published.

In December of the above mentioned year Mr. Boyle, Mr. Denham, Mr. Ashmole, and Henry Oldenburg, a German, who afterwards became secretary to the society, were received as members. In 1663 Charles the Second took this institution under his protection, and constituted it a Royal Society, and a corporation. The diplomas given on this occasion may be seen before the printed statutes of the society<sup>9</sup>. Ac-

<sup>9</sup> *Diplomata et Statuta Regalis Societatis, Londini, pro Scientia naturali promovenda—Jussu præsidis et concilii edita, 1752.* The Latin in which these diplomata are written is such, that it is scarcely possible for it to be worse. A foreigner, who is not acquainted with the English language, will hardly be able to understand it. It is to be regretted, that the Society did not commission one or more of its members to draw them up properly, and, if not to give them a Roman or classical turn, at least to expunge the grammatical errors which are to be found in them. The editors seem to have been afraid to alter any thing, in printing them. The grammatical faults, therefore, are conscientiously printed off, and marked with a star, referring to the words at the bottom of the page, *Sic legitur in authentico!*

cording

According to these statutes, every one, who wishes to become a member of the society, is to promise, that he will promote the knowledge of natural philosophy. The meeting of the society is fixed in these statutes, for Wednesday, at three o'clock in the afternoon; but it has been since changed, and Thursday at eight o'clock in the evening, is the time now substituted. Different letters and memoirs, addressed to the society, are then read, and the new members, who have been proposed in the manner required by the statutes, are balloted for. This lasts for an hour, after which the President dismisses the society. It is, at present, not the custom to converse or debate, during the meeting, upon the subjects which are communicated either in memoirs or letters. There has been, within these last years, a pretty warm debate in the society, of which I shall presently say a few words, but it was not upon points relating to natural philosophy.

The history of this society was first undertaken by Dr. Sprat, afterwards bishop of Rochester; but as his book appeared so early as the year 1667, it extends itself only over a very short space of time. Dr. Birch, who was, for some years, secretary to the society, took the subject up again; but, finding that the sale of his book did

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did not answer the expences, he dropped his undertaking, after he had carried his history only down as far as the year 1687<sup>10</sup>. Every thing remarkable, which was transacted in the society, during that period, is here collected from the minutes of the secretaries. The lives of the members, who died during this time, are inserted; and though they are not so complete as might be wished, are yet entertaining to those who are fond of biography. Among them that of Oldenburg is to be found. This honest, learned, and laborious man, who particularly, by means of his very extensive foreign correspondence, did, in his time, much contribute to the renown which the society then acquired, had a salary of forty pounds as secretary; and he says, in one of his letters, that with a hundred pounds annually, including sixty which he had by marriage, he was hardly able to maintain his family.

Those papers, which the society selects for publication, are now collected *annually in one volume*, and printed under the title of *Philosophical Transactions*. The number of volumes published hitherto, amount to about eighty. Great part

<sup>10</sup> The History of the Royal Society for improving Natural Knowledge, from its first Rise, &c. By Thomas Birch, D. D. Four Vols. 4to. London, 1756.

of them has been abridged by several learned men<sup>1</sup>, but these Abridgments, which certainly are of great use, go no farther at present than to the year 1750.

It has been frequently asserted, that many of the memoirs, or papers, which are printed by the society, do not answer the expectation, which might naturally be formed of the publications of so respectable a body<sup>2</sup>. This is not so much to be wondered at, considering that among four or five hundred of its members, the number of those who write, and do it to the credit and honour of the society, is not very great. Besides, it was but a few years since, as I believe, that a committee was appointed, to select those papers which are to be laid before the public; and it is thought, that, from that time, the selection of them, is, in many respects, superior to what it was formerly.

<sup>1</sup> Philosophical Transactions and Collections of the Royal Society to the Year 1700, abridged by John Lowthorpe, 3 Vols. 4to. 1705.—From 1700 to 1720, abridged by Benjamin Motte, 2 Vols. 4to. 1721.—From 1719 to 1733, by John Eames and John Martyn, 2 Vols. 4to. 1734. With a general Index 1735.—From 1732 to 1750, by John Martyn. 4 Vols. 4to. 1756.

<sup>2</sup> I refer the reader to the new edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, vol. i. Art. *Baker* (Henry), note [A], where he will find this subject more amply discussed.

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I have before declared, that the usefulness of this society, and the services which it has rendered to the sciences, are undeniable; but it has nevertheless, from time to time, met with adversaries, who have attacked both the society itself, and its publications. It has been said, that many of its members became such merely from vanity; and that they are admitted only on account of their payments, though they have, as it is pretended, no claim either to learning or taste. It is also brought as a charge against the society, that in their elections of new members rank, titles, and riches, have too much influence; and that learning, and particularly in natural philosophy, is not much enquired after. I have myself heard these charges frequently, but I have found that they are by no means new. Sir Richard Steele, in the *Tatler*, advances the same charges, when he says: "There is no study more becoming a rational creature, than that of natural philosophy; but as several of our modern virtuosos manage it, their speculations do not so much tend to open and enlarge the mind, as to contract and fix it upon trifles. This in England is, in great measure, owing to the worthy elections that are so frequently made in our Royal Society. They seem to be in confederacy against men of polite genius, noble thought,  
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and diffusive learning; and chuse into their assemblies such as have no pretence to wisdom, but want of wit; or to natural knowledge, but ignorance of every thing else. I have made observations on this matter so long, that when I meet with a young fellow, that is an humble admirer of these sciences, but more dull than the rest of the company, I conclude him to be a fellow of the Royal Society<sup>3</sup>. The late Dr. Hill, as it is supposed from resentment, gave extracts from the Philosophical Transactions, with remarks<sup>4</sup>, which are very laughable. I have heard sensible members of the Royal Society express a wish, that those memoirs, which the doctor has quoted, had never been inserted into the Transactions; and they acknowledged, that many of his ironical remarks were not without foundation. Before Dr. Hill, Abraham Johnson, and others, have attacked the society in their writings.

The society, which at the beginning assembled in Gresham college, now turned into a costly residence of the excise, had afterwards a house in Crane-court, Fleet-street, where the

<sup>3</sup> Tatler, vol. iv. No. 237. p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> Review of the Works of the Royal Society of London, by John Hill, M. D. 1751, 4to. There has been a new edition printed since.

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meetings were held, and its library and museum kept. But since a very noble building has been erected, in the Strand, where formerly Somerset-palace stood, the society has been there provided with very convenient apartments. The library, which is opened twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday, is of no great consequence. The greatest part consists of the old library of Bilibald Pirkheimer, which was bought at Nuremberg in Germany, by one of the ancestors of the dukes of Norfolk, and afterwards presented to the Royal Society<sup>s</sup>. A proper fund is wanting to increase this library. The museum, which belonged to the society, is at present united with the British museum in Great Ruffel-street.

Besides a patron, who is always the king, the society has a president and two secretaries, who are elected annually; but if nothing can be alleged against them, and they choose to continue in their places, they are generally re-chosen. The society has, likewise, a council, in which the president presides, consisting of one and twenty members, ten of whom go out annually, and as many are re-elected. These elections

<sup>s</sup> See *Bibliotheca Norfolciana Regiæ Societati donata*. London. 1681.

## LEARNED SOCIETIES. 113

take place on the 30th of November, or St. Andrew's day, when at the same time it is decided, who is to receive the golden medal, left in the will of sir Godfrey Copley, for the author of the best memoir, relating to natural philosophy, which during that year has been printed in the Transactions of the society.

The foreign correspondence, which, at the time when Oldenburg was secretary, was of great extent and of much consequence, is at present no more so. It has, however, been lately proposed to make it again more extensive.

The number of honorary members, which were received into the society, was, some years ago, very great. It was by no means difficult to obtain this honour, and d' Alembert, Diderot, and other Frenchmen, celebrated in the republic of letters, used to ask in joke, their learned countrymen, who travelled into England, Whether they had a desire to become members of the Royal Society in London; in which case they gave them a few letters of recommendation, which procured them this honour without much difficulty. These jokes, and it having been discovered, that many people, from all parts of Europe, who among their own nations were considered as men



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of no bright talents, were received as members of the Royal Society in London, occasioned the election of honorary members, for some years to be suspended, till the number was reduced to a hundred, which now it is not to exceed.

It has been asserted, that some members of the society are not very fond of receiving learned and eminent men of the Dissenters amongst them; but they certainly do not constitute a majority, and the seal of the society, a *tabula rasa* with the motto, *nullius in verba*, is by no means applicable to their way of thinking.

During the winter of 1784, some commotions prevailed in the society, and produced debates rather too violent for a philosophical spirit. Some of the members menaced a secession, and one of them thus addressed the president in the heat of debate: "Sir, when the hour of secession comes, the president will be left with his train of feeble *amateurs*, and that toy upon the table, the ghost of that society in which Philosophy once reigned, and Newton presided as her minister." However this hour did not come; the philosophers grew cool and calm again, and the president seems to be esteemed as much as ever.

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H. L. V.

## LEARNED SOCIETIES. , 115

I have drawn up this article the more extensively, because Brucker, in his voluminous work on the History of Philosophy<sup>6</sup>; has little more than barely mentioned this society, though it makes, if I may so express it, a new epocha in the history of true philosophy.

<sup>6</sup> *Historia Philosophiæ*, tom. v. p. 663. sec. edit.

## THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON.

**T**OWARDS the end of the sixteenth century, about the year 1572, a kind of Antiquarian Society was formed, under the patronage of archbishop Parker, which assembled for twenty years together, in the house of sir Robert Cotton, and got into some repute. The little mind and the jealousy of James I. took alarm, and he dissolved it. In the beginning of the present century, some lovers of antiquity agreed to meet every Wednesday, in a house in Fleet-street; and whoever was desirous of being received as a member of their society, paid half a guinea for entrance, and a shilling at every meeting. It was by the interest of lord Hardwicke and their then president Martin Folkes, that in the year 1751, they obtained a charter similar to that of the Royal Society, in which the king declared himself their Founder and Patron. They now compiled a body of statutes, and adopted a common seal, which, as an engraving, is to be seen upon the title page of  
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their Transactions, representing a burning lamp, with the motto, *nōn extinguetur*.

The chief object of the enquiries and researches of the society are British Antiquities and History, not, however, wholly excluding those of other countries. Since the year 1770, the society has published its transactions, in a similar manner as those of the Royal Society, under the title of *Archæologia; or, Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Antiquity*, of which about nine volumes have been printed. It has been said, that the attention and the researches of the society are too often employed about trifles, and the sweepings of antiquity; that many of the memoirs, which they publish, have the appearance of micrology, instead of furnishing both instruction and entertainment, by discovering and restoring traits of the character, the manners, the arts and sciences of ancient times and nations, which have been nearly obliterated by a long series of elapsed centuries. But, supposing there were some foundation for such a censure, allowance should be made for the difference of the taste of those who write such memoirs, and of those who read them. Some readers will be highly amused with reading that, which a critic may condemn as trifling and useless; and it may very well be

asked, Why the taste of the former should not as well be gratified as that which the latter thinks to be the only true one? The late Mr. Foote used to entertain the audience at his theatre at the expence of this society, but he carried, in my opinion, the ridicule too far.

The expences of the members of this society, and the regulations observed in their meetings, together with the manner of electing new members, resemble much those of the Royal Society. Noblemen and persons of high rank are received into the society, without a previous scrutiny of character, to which other members are subject, before they are admitted. Perhaps, it might not altogether be amiss, to make some exceptions in regard to such an immediate admittance, even for reasons of finance; for, I have been rather surprized and diverted, when I have sometimes been present at the meetings of this society, and seen pieces of paste-board shoved about upon the long table, exposing the names of noble persons, who, for years together, have not paid, for reasons best known to themselves, the contributions for the support of the society, to which they are bound by its statutes.

This society has likewise apartments in the new buildings of Somerset-place, and assembles  
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in a room contiguous to that of the Royal Society, on the same day when the latter meets, but an hour earlier. Those members, therefore, of the Antiquarian Society, who are of the Royal Society likewise, may go, when the former breaks up, into the latter immediately.

About the middle of the month of June this society closes its sessions, as well as the Royal Society, and renews them again in the month of November.

## THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

A Society for improving arts and sciences, which went by the title of *The Philosophical Society*, had existed many years at Edinburgh, and had published several volumes of *Transactions*, when, in 1782, it was proposed to establish a new society on a more extensive plan. This being done, it obtained in the following year a royal charter, and was incorporated under the name of the *Royal Society of Edinburgh*.

It is formed upon a plan somewhat different from that in London; and, as it appears to me, upon a plan that is rather preferable; for it is divided into two classes; one of which is called the *physical*, and the other the *literary class*. The first alone, has all those sciences for its object which engage the Royal Society of London; and the other is occupied about general literature, philology, history, antiquities, and speculative philosophy. The whole society has a president, two vice-presidents, a council consisting

sisting of twelve members, a secretary, and a treasurer. Each of the two classes has, besides, four presidents, and two secretaries. This society has lately begun to publish its Transactions, and the first volume of them appeared in 1788.

There is also a Society of Antiquaries at Edinburgh like that of London.

At Dublin in Ireland, a Royal Society has recently been instituted; but, none of its transactions, so far as I know, have yet been printed.

Besides these Royal Societies, others which do not boast of royal patronage, have been formed in several parts of Great Britain, with an intent to promote arts and sciences. Some are of a longer standing, others of a later date; some, perhaps, cease to exist, and others rise again. Among the many institutions of this kind, I shall only mention those at Manchester and Spalding, which have published some volumes of their memoirs. Literary clubs have also been formed, particularly in London; but generally upon plans not much calculated to answer their intention, to promote the true interest of literature, and to procure to those who visit them, that agreeable conversation, of which literary men stand so much in need,  
partly



partly to enjoy a necessary relaxation from more serious studies, partly to communicate useful thoughts to each other, or to hear literary news, and to give and to receive hints, which might be turned to the advantage of science. Such clubs too frequently turn out eating and drinking societies, and for a literary, agreeable, conversation, idle political debates are often substituted. Indeed, I have found, during a long residence in London, that men of letters have much reason to wish that, in so great a metropolis, two of their wants might be better supplied, I mean in regard to public libraries, and agreeable literary conversation.

As to public libraries, there is none of note, except that in the British Museum, which, though a very numerous and valuable collection, is yet in many respects very deficient, and, as to its use, much circumscribed. Several attempts have been made, within these few years, and many schemes have been formed, to remove this want, and the inconveniences arising from it, but without the wished-for success. As for circulating libraries, even those which are thought to be the best and most eminent, they are more for the convenience of idle people than of the learned. The honourable Mr. Cavendish is now forming a kind of public library in Bedford-square, upon  
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a very useful plan, and I cannot but wish that the best success may attend it. From the intention of its founder, the collection of books of which it consists, is confined only to certain sciences and select branches of literature.

A public library, well situated, consisting of the best ancient and modern books, designed more for utility than to gratify curiosity, to which there was an easy access, and which was open at all proper times, would be an institution of the greatest advantage to the learned who resided, or made some stay in London. If to the rooms of such a library, another was added for conversation, and for perusing the newest literary journals, it would gratify the utmost wishes which men of letters could reasonably entertain. A liberal subscription, and some patronage, might easily produce so noble and useful an establishment; which, at the same time that it must do honour to the character of the nation, as a learned one, would be a more lasting, and more respected monument, to perpetuate the memory of its first founders, than any which might be erected for them in Westminster-abbey.

In several great towns on the continent, a society of learned men, resident there, have, by annual subscriptions, hired either a whole house, or only a set of rooms, which are opened

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ed every day for subscribers, and hardly ever empty of company, where they meet under certain regulations and rules, not for eating and drinking, but merely for conversation, at any time of the day which they please. Learned foreigners are sometimes introduced by some of the subscribers, and whoever wishes for an hour of relaxation, or to see a friend belonging to such a society, will seldom be disappointed in those intentions, with which he left his home or his study. Many of such societies and conversation rooms might be established in so large a town as London, at no great expence; but I have never heard of any thing of this kind resembling what I have seen on the continent, and which I found highly useful and agreeable to a traveller. Oftentimes have I met with foreigners, of different nations, coming from the continent, who have expressed their surprize at such a want, and considered it as a proof of that unfociableness with which the English character is charged abroad; but which, in my opinion, does not go to the extent that foreigners are apt to believe. They draw their inferences of this kind from the number of solitary beings who walk about with an air of melancholy, or from those who come thoughtfully into the gloomy coffee-house, look out for an empty box or  
table

## LEARNED SOCIETIES. 125

table to sit down by themselves, and to read the papers, or to eat their dinner without speaking to any body. If another person happens to take his seat in the same box, he finds his neighbour as silent as an Harpocrates, and sees that he avoids the meeting of each other's eyes very carefully, or perhaps even with a sulky air. From this foreigners are apt to conclude, that the generality of the English, both the learned and the unlearned, are averse to society; in which opinion I have often taken much pains to undeceive them, though I cannot say always successfully. Abroad the bookfellers shops are frequently the places where the learned meet, and have some conversation about literary news, and learned subjects; a custom which prevailed even in antient Rome<sup>7</sup> But this is likewise not the case in London; a few bookfellers shops, perhaps, excepted, where sometimes two or three literary men, who are either customers, or acquainted with the master of the shop, accidentally meet, and spend a few minutes in a conversation about literary matters.

<sup>7</sup> Apud Agillaniam, forte in libraria, ego et Julius Paulus, vir memoria nostra doctissimus, confederamus, &c. *A. Gellius lib. v. cap. 4.*

## SCHOOLS.

## S C H O O L S.

**G**RAMMAR schools in England are those, wherein the Latin, the Greek, and perhaps the Hebrew languages are taught, and boys prepared to go, if they choose it, to one of the English universities. They, therefore, properly speaking, belong to the episcopal church, though, sometimes, children of dissenting parents are educated in them, without afterwards going to either of the two English universities, where they would be obliged to subscribe the nine and thirty Articles, or make a declaration of their being members of the church of England. Schools of this denomination are established in many of the principal towns of the kingdom; and in London are no less than the following four, that of Westminster, that of St. Paul, the Charterhouse, and Merchant-taylors schools. Most of these institutions are endowed, for the benefit of a limited number of scholars, either by royal munificence, or by corporations, or by some other benefactors. It is not my intention to give here a minute ac-

count of the plans upon which these schools are founded ; and I shall only observe, that there is much room for their reformation and improvement, as well in regard to instruction and learning, as to manners and morals.

I have before observed, in another place, that in most English public schools, the number of those who instruct is not altogether in proportion to those who are to be instructed. A Grammar-school has, generally, a head or upper-master, and an under-master, assisted by some ushers or assistant masters. The number of boys is nearly two, or perhaps three hundred, divided into seven or eight forms or classes. It can hardly be expected, that so few teachers should keep proper order among so many boys, and give them such instruction as may be supposed to be adequate to the purpose for which they are placed in these schools, or could be adapted, even but in a small degree, to their different capacities. Besides, there is generally, but one large school-room, where the greatest part of the boys, if not all, are to assemble, and to receive at one time, their instruction from their different masters. It is easily to be imagined, that this must be a great impediment to that attention, which is so necessary, and yet so seldom to be met with in schools ; and that the noise, produced by the  
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teaching of different masters at the same time, and the noise of the boys, which is a matter of course, must give such an assembly rather the appearance of a Jewish synagogue than of a well regulated school.

The manners and the conduct of many of the boys, educated in these schools, particularly in London, where bad examples and opportunities to do evil, are so frequent, and operate so powerfully, deserve little commendation. They have too much liberty, and are treated with too much lenity, and indulgence, which young people, for want of better judgment and more experience, are very apt to abuse. Being, therefore, early initiated in many vices, they render themselves too often, even at the beginning of life, unhappy both with regard to mind and body.

The masters of the principal grammar schools are generally men of learning and of eminence. Their yearly income is very considerable; and I am certain, that the head masters of our Grammar-schools in Germany, though their labour is far greater, have not the twentieth part of what those have in England. Besides, the masters of English Grammar-schools have the fairest chance, from various reasons, to be promoted to high and very lucrative places in the established church, to which they belong. Deaneries and bishop-

bishopricks are sometimes the rewards of their scholastic labours.

I have been informed, that seven years are required in some of these schools, to go through all the different forms or classes, and to rise from the lowest to the highest. No sciences, not even mathematics are taught, nor foreign living languages. Whoever is desirous of being instructed in them, or in music, dancing, drawing, is to pay the separate teachers, who give lessons in each particular branch. A collection of school-books, and selections from Latin and Greek authors, particularly those which are used at Eton-school, were sent some years ago, by order of a great personage, to professor Heyne at Gottingen, the editor of a much admired edition of Virgil, to give his opinion of them. He has done it, and it is published<sup>s</sup>, but his judgment is not very favourable.

In some of these schools, the boys now and then act Latin plays. I have myself seen, at several times, a play of Terence performed in the dormitory of Westminster school, and I was pleased to see how much justice the actors did

<sup>s</sup> In the *Gottingen Magazine* for the year 1780. No. 6. P. 429. in German.



to the best of Latin comic writers. A foreigner, however, who is not acquainted with the English pronunciation of the Latin, will be totally at a loss to understand them. Some new Latin prologues and epilogues, which were spoken on such occasions, did honour to those who wrote them.

I have observed, that many private persons, though their fortune is not adequate to the expences required, will send their sons to such schools which are in reputation, that they may be educated with noblemen's sons, and others, who, it is supposed, will have, in time, some influence in the state, in order to form connexions with them, and, by means of their friendship and patronage, advance themselves in the world. This, in many instances, I have found to turn out a very fallacious speculation. Connexions formed from a view of selfishness and interest, arising generally from a narrow mind, are frequently broken off; and the advantages, which were expected, vanish at a time when they were considered as necessary to the happiness of those who lived in hope of them. Sometimes, boys, instructed by their parents previously how to behave and to promote such views, will, by cringing submission and an abject flattery, render themselves contemptible,

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even in the eyes of those whom they wish to oblige; sometimes, when they remove with their supposed future patrons to one of the two universities, they will go to greater expences than they are able to bear, and get involved in an extravagant, or even profligate way of life. Friendships formed and supported upon such a plan can never be lasting; and when they are once broken off, the expectations, which were long entertained, are not only at an end, but a habit of living is contracted by them, which, as it cannot be maintained, must render the person, who is accustomed to it, the more miserable.

Besides these Grammar-schools, a number of a more private nature, for both sexes, are to be met with, which go under the denomination of Boarding-schools, or, by a more refined name, that of Academies. There is hardly a small town, or even a large village in England, where the traveller is not presented with the sight of a large black board, on which is inscribed in golden letters, "A Boarding-school" or "An Academy." Some of these houses, by their outward appearance, do not promise much; though they bear sometimes the inscription "Young Ladies genteely educated." In board-

ing schools for boys, here and there, much wildness is to be seen; and as to those for girls, that genteel education which is signified on the board, has frequently the happy consequences, that the boarding-school misses get their heads so full of fantastical notions and modish follies, that they become for ever unfit to make good wives. Nay, they commence love-intrigues at a very early period of life, and sometimes run away, even from school, upon a matrimonial expedition, with a man who pretends to be captivated by their beauty and accomplishments, and leaves them afterwards in a situation, in which they have reason and leisure enough to repent of their folly. Every person, man or woman, is at liberty to set up a boarding-school, if they have any hope of meeting with success; though there are many, even within my own knowledge, who are in all respects very well qualified for the education of children; yet there are others who are quite the contrary. A tradesman, who, perhaps, has failed in business, either from misfortune or his own fault, or a woman, who never had a proper education herself, or whose moral character cannot very well bear a strict enquiry, will set up boarding-schools, and sometimes meet with more encouragement than

than those who are more deserving. They keep ushers, teachers, and masters to assist them, who are frequently as unqualified for the business they are employed in, as those by whom they were hired at a salary as low as possible. I confess, I have often wondered, how unconcerned many English parents seem to be about the education of their children. Many a rich man, when he has a horse to be broken in, or a dog to be trained, will carefully enquire whether the person he entrusts them with, is properly qualified for the business; but, this is not always the case with parents, when they place their children to be educated. Clergymen, who are not provided with a sufficient income to support themselves or their family, will now and then set up a boarding-school, and such are mostly the best of the kind, though they also admit of exceptions. I shall make an observation upon the English boarding-schools, which I think to be a very just one, when I give, in the second part of this volume, an account of the Quakers.

The generality of children, who are educated in these schools, do not make any great progress in their learning. The frequent holidays, which sometimes continue for several weeks,

and are given, during the course of the year, for the benefit of those who keep such schools, do not contribute towards their improvement, either in learning or manners. They go home, during such a vacation, to their parents, where they indulge themselves in every thing else but what they are to learn at school: for very few fathers or mothers give themselves the trouble to prevent them from returning worse to school than they came from thence; though some, perhaps, will discharge even this duty towards the education of their children.

It ought to be said, in favour of the generality of English boarding-schools for boys, that they are more calculated to make them useful for society, than to fill their head and their memory with such things as are very useless to those who afterwards follow no learned professions. Good school-masters are more intent to make those, whom they instruct, develop their capacities, and render them in time prudent and skilful to discharge the duties of life and society, than to make them shine with a little learning, that is forgotten almost as soon as they leave the school. Rousseau, in his treatise on education, very justly censures those school-masters, who chiefly teach their boys those things, which  
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render them in the the course of life more vain than useful ; but I, wish he had left out an anecdote, with which he concludes the first volume of his *Emilius*, and the truth of which I have had an opportunity of examining. An English gentleman, after three years absence, returned to his own country. Being desirous to know what progress in learning his little boy, nine years of age, had made during his absence, he repaired to the school where he was placed, in an afternoon, and walking with his son, accompanied by the school-master, on the play-ground, he asked the boy, Where stands the kite of which you see the shade here on the ground ? The boy, knowing that his school-fellows as well as himself, used to play with their kites on the other side of the wall, where the highway runs along, answered immediately, " Over the road." The father, thinking his son, only nine years old, answered his question from optical principles, embraced his child with parental warmth, finished his examination immediately, and rewarded the school-master most bountifully the day following, by settling an annuity upon him. Full of his usual fire, honest Rousseau exclaims upon this occasion, " Quel homme que ce pèrelà, et quel fils lui étoit promis ! La question

est précisément de l'âge : la réponse est bien simple ; mais voyez quelle netteté de judiciaire enfantine elle suppose ! C'est ainsi que l'élève d'Aristote apprivoisoit ce courfier celebre, qu'aucun écuyer n'avoit pu dompter !" A person unacquainted with the merits and talents of Rousseau, both which are so estimable, might here ask, Where is the deep and sharp-sighted philosopher ? and find it difficult to avoid laughter. The young modern Alexander, whom he extols so highly, has never acquired any celebrity.

The mode of education in England has its singularities, in schools for boys as well as for girls. This may be considered as the foundation of those characteristic traits, by which the English distinguish themselves from other nations. When in England the Romish was the established religion, and its government had more resemblance to such arbitrary power as is prevalent in many other countries, the education, under the direction of priests, who were either foreigners, or Englishmen educated abroad, was more similar to that in other countries, and consequently the character of the nation more like that of its neighbours. But, at present, if a child born in England, was from  
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its early years educated in a foreign country, and sent back to England at the age of eighteen, let it be boy or girl, it would be spoiled for life, and find itself if not wretched, at least very uncomfortable in its native country. An Englishman, educated from his early days in France, Germany, Italy or in Switzerland, will always, even against his will, betray something of the foreigner; he will find, that many of his countrymen, from prejudice, will look upon him in such a light, that he cannot gain their confidence and esteem so easily as if he had been bred among them; and, if I may express myself so paradoxically, being left more to nature, had been more transformed, by the art of English education, into an Englishman. I need not mention, that if a German boy, at three years of age, were to be carried over to England, and educated among English boys, he would become in time a complete Englishman. He would, if he returned to his own country, at the age of manhood, express as much aversion and indignation against German manners, and the German way of life, as ever a true John Bull would shew, if he were at once, out of the midst of England, transported into Westphalia. That the English extol their manners,  
their



their way of life, their pleasures, above those of any other country, and, from a ridiculous national pride, despise and laugh at them as infinitely inferior to theirs, is owing to the education which they receive. So much does an Englishman's national character, his way of thinking, nay his whole happiness, depend on the manner in which he is educated !

UNIVER-

## UNIVERSITIES.

A Boy, if only fifteen years old, when he wishes to be entered as a member of either of the two English universities, is to subscribe previously the nine and thirty Articles; even if he had never read them in his life, for

By statute he's oblig'd to vow  
To do, he knows not what, nor how.

HUDIBRAS.

This unhallowed custom has been frequently censured, remonstrated, and written against, but hitherto to little purpose<sup>9</sup>. It appears from this subscription, which is always required, that the two English universities can be frequented only by those of the episcopal or established church, and that, on this account, all dissenters are excluded from them.

It is well known among us, that the manner in which studies are prosecuted, in these univer-

<sup>9</sup> At Cambridge, some alteration has been lately made; subscription to the Articles is not required at matriculation; but the students are obliged to declare themselves members of the church of England, which is nearly equivalent, and they must still subscribe before they can take any degree.

fities,

fities, is very different from that which prevails in other protestant universities. The students at Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, live in colleges, greatly resembling monasteries. Much, of what is called, learning, but at the same time much ignorance and pedantry, is to be met with in them. Gray, one of the best English poets, who spent many years of his life at Cambridge, does not represent them in the most favourable light, when in one of his poems he apostrophizes the colleges, and begins with

Hail, horrors, hail, ye ever gloomy bowers!

Ye Gothic fanes and antiquated towers, &c.

Though this description of Gray, which I do not choose to transcribe at full length, appears to me rather too poetical, or, which is the same, a little *outré*; yet, upon the whole, I think he is in the right. The greatest part, indeed, of those who frequent these universities, do not make any considerable progress in learning, or knowledge; and, if lord Chesterfield is to be credited, neither do they in manners<sup>10</sup>. There have been, and are now, both at Oxford and Cambridge, men eminent for their learning, and celebrated by their writings; and I am myself acquainted with some, who deserve to be esteemed

<sup>10</sup> Chesterfield's Letters to his Son, lett. clxxxi. ccxii. cclvi.

for their erudition and politeness; but, whether they owe this to their education and their residence in the universities I cannot decide. This I know, that many who have resided in them, and have afterwards acquired celebrity, frequently join in the censure and the satire that is thrown out against these seats of learning. The foundations, the legacies, and the donations of which these universities may boast, are very great; and the accumulated benefactions bestowed from ages to their colleges, for the encouragement of learning, are the most generous. Nevertheless, the end is but indifferently obtained. Indeed, the state of these celebrated universities makes quite a contrast with many on the continent. Education and science are in a flourishing condition in many of ours, such as Leipzig, Gottingen, Halle, and Jena, notwithstanding the scanty manner in which they and their professors are endowed. The contrary might be said of those in England; and I am inclined to think, that their very riches, and the affluence which their members enjoy, is the true reason why they differ so much. The well-being of our universities, and the subsistence of our learned men in them, depends on their abilities, their assiduity, and their reputation; but in England, they live in luxury, in colleges resembling

sembling palaces, and their annual income is secured without the assistance of industry ; or, if they are professors, they seem to be unconcerned about the applause of the students. The latter, finding themselves rather neglected, and the lectures which are read but few in number, and of little importance, their emulation naturally is not much excited, and they are led to prefer amusements and vices, to study and improvement in sciences. In short, the English universities stand in need of much reformation ; and though the reasons for it are very obvious, and the necessity visible, yet I think it will be a long while before any thing of this kind will ever take place. Many rich monasteries on the continent have been abolished, by power, within these ten years ; but I am certain, that none of the societies that lived, and were fed in them, would voluntarily have submitted to a thorough reformation of their convents, and much less would they themselves have brought it about, by their own accord.

The constitution of the English universities, and the circumstance of the students living in colleges, is not so old as they themselves pretend. Nay, it is even a subject of dispute between these two *almæ matres*, which of them is the oldest ; though it is acknowledged, that  
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very old age does not strengthen the powers of the mind, but rather leads to a second childhood. The origin of the colleges, in both these universities, is to be sought for in the middle of the thirteenth century. Before that time, the students lived in private houses, and hired some large rooms, where lectures were read and academical exercises performed. Afterwards some bishops, some men of quality or riches, nay kings and queens themselves, who wished to shew themselves as patrons of learning, erected, at their own expence, these convent-like mansions, in which a number of young men, under the care of a superior or master, and those who were made his associates, received their education, and were maintained by the provision made by the founder of such a college, and other benefactors. The heads of colleges, therefore, might have been compared to abbots, though they went under a different name; and those who were placed at their side as *secii*, or, in English, *Fellows*, were equal to those in convents, which are called *conventuales*. The fellows in these colleges are, as such, not permitted to marry, and if they do, they lose their fellowships. The number of those who live as students in a college, depends partly on the extent of its endowments, and partly

partly on the reputation of its tutors, who are to instruct the young men sent there for education. There are at Oxford five Halls, which are not reckoned to be colleges, because they have no endowments for fellowships, and are looked upon as appendages to some college, though they have a principal of their own. At Cambridge the name of Hall is likewise in use, but there it is equivalent to a college. Clare-hall, Trinity-hall, &c. are splendid colleges; have a number of fellows, and are independent. The heads of colleges go under different names. In some they are called provost, in others master, or warden, or principal, or rector. Besides them each college has a visitor, who is frequently a bishop, though sometimes noblemen are chosen for that kind of dignity.

It appears from the constitution of these colleges, that their founders had particularly two things in view. The first was, that young men might be instructed in them; and the second, that the fellows, and the scholars also who had past the instruction of the tutor, might pursue by themselves their studies in quietness, and without being subject to many of the cares of life. But noble as these intentions are, it cannot often be said that they are answered. Each college has its library, some of which are very large,

large, and well furnished with valuable books. A garden frequently belongs to a college, for the recreation of its inhabitants. I have seen in some of these gardens a bowling-green, and in Emmanuel-college at Cambridge a neat cold-bath. Each college has likewise a chapel, and chaplains are appointed to read the prayers. The halls in which they dine in common are generally very elegant. In short, every provision is made for those who, for the sake of study, live in these colleges; and every convenience is thought of, that they may, without interruption, if they choose it, apply themselves to their studies. And, indeed, if the fellows, and the masters of arts in such colleges, are friends to science and learning; if they can reconcile themselves to a studious life, and to retirement; if they find a pleasure in rational amusements, in books and meditation, or in agreeable literary conversation among themselves, I believe no institutions could be better calculated for such purposes than these colleges. But I am sorry to think, that this is seldom the case, and that what I have said, suits very few of their inhabitants. Most of them, I believe, had rather be anywhere else than in these mansions, which were dedicated to the Muses, but which they consider



as the gloomy dwellings of sadness and melancholy.

Whatever a student learns in these universities, it is from the tutors, or from his own private application. Most colleges of any note have two of them, some perhaps more. If he has spent four years under such a tuition, and attended the hours of instruction, he then is left in his studies to himself and his own application. It may easily be supposed, that these tutors have much to do; that they must be men of no small abilities, of considerable learning, and much industry; three qualities which, perhaps, are not always found united in one person. There are, to my own knowledge, very able, learned, and deserving men among them, who take great pains with their pupils; but I will not presume to assert, that such constitute the majority. Here again, I cannot help repeating, that the number of instructors is not proportionable to the pupils. So many of different capacities, who come so differently qualified from school to the university, are here, at the same time, instructed by the same tutor; and it cannot be supposed, that they should be equally benefitted by the instruction which they receive.

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It appears to us in Germany, considering the manner in which studies are prosecuted in our universities, almost impossible to conceive, how one tutor should be able to give lessons in all those sciences which a student, according to our ideas, is to learn in the university. But we ought to know, that in England not the third part of that is required, which in our country is deemed necessary for a student to know, or at least to be instructed in. The English, in this respect, certainly attend more to the dictates of good sense, than we do. The principal rule, by which all instruction in schools and universities should be regulated, is that which, according to Plutarch, Agefilaus gave for answer to him, who asked, what boys were to be taught? "Teach them", said he, "that which they will find still useful, when they are grown up men." I will, however, not affirm, that this wise and excellent advice is always kept in view in English universities. The instruction in them generally refers to Latin and Greek, to grammar, to mathematics, to natural and some other branches of philosophy. It depends on the tutor what Latin and Greek authors he chooses to explain to his pupils; and the custom of some of them, of reading the scientific classical authors with their pupils

in the original, is certainly much to be approved. Thus sometimes Euclid and Aristotle will be explained from the Greek, when the instruction to be given refers to mathematics, to rhetoric, or to poetry. In the same manner, and for the same purpose, parts of the works of Plato, Plutarch, Cicero, Quintilian, and others, will be read. By these means the learning of the languages is facilitated, the pupils are made acquainted with the sciences, and they have an opportunity, by due attention and proper application, to form their taste more after the ancient classics. Whether this method, on account of its utility, is so frequently adopted as might be expected, and whether the pupils avail themselves properly of it, to improve both in languages and in sciences, are questions upon which I do not pretend to decide.

As for the other books, which serve as lecture-books, for the instruction of the young students, they are mostly of an old date; and I wonder that modern authors are not substituted instead of them, as preferable. At Cambridge, Locke and Newton are used by some tutors in their philosophical lectures; Maclaurin, Hellsham, Hamilton, and Ferguson in mathematics; Usher and Marsham in history and chronology; Grotius or Puffendorff in the law of nations;

nations; but at Oxford, these modern writers, as I have been informed, are not those from which the young students receive their instruction. By the statutes of the university of Oxford, the authority of Aristotle is still very great. He is to be the guide in dialectics, and whoever wishes to obtain the degree of bachelor of arts, is to prepare himself by exercises, which are thus described: *Diebus lunæ, &c. questiones logicales proponat, quas secundum Aristotelem (cujus suprema sit auctoritas) defendat.* This, indeed, sounds pretty scholastic! Since, however, mathematics are so much cultivated in these universities, and the Elements of Euclid are justly styled by Locke the best system of logic in the world, and superior to all dry and frequently useless rules and doctrines of metaphysics, I am rather inclined to give the preference, in this branch of education, which in our schools is called philosophy, to the English. Metaphysics are over-rated, and too much time spent upon them in our universities, which produces that attachment to systems, and that inclination for system-building, that many of our learned men are so often, and frequently not without reason, censured for, by those of other countries. I therefore, cannot help wishing, that, in imitation of the English, we applied

ourselves in our universities rather more to mathematics, and that the rule of the old Pythagoreans were inscribed over the lecture-rooms in our universities : *ἔδειξ ἀρετὰ μάλιστα εἰσὶν*.

According to the statutes of the university, a student is to be four years under the instruction of his tutor. The sons of peers of the realm are, however, excepted from this regulation ; for three years, or, if the chancellor will grant it, even less time is sufficient to finish their studies under the tutor. A person that knows no better, might perhaps suspect here, that the *almæ matres*, who are looked upon as the *nutrices bonarum literarum atque artium*, are, in this instance, not unlike other good nurses, who think that noble birth and riches supply the want of talents and learning. If a young man has thus spent under his tutor the time prescribed, he prepares himself to take the first degree of academical honours, which is that of a bachelor of arts. At the college of Dublin, the student is to undergo quarterly examinations, during the first of his academical years ; which, though to all appearance a very useful regulation, is, as I find, not adopted in the two English universities. Most young men pass the three first years, after their matriculation, in a manner not much suited to progress in learning,  
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and their occupations are oftentimes very different from those of scholars. On entering the fourth year of their residence in the university, they get themselves ready, as well as they can, to take their first degree. For this purpose a disputation is required, which, indeed, is not of much consequence; and yet many seem to entertain great apprehensions before it is over. When these exercises are performed, hardly any body is present, excepting those who are obliged to be there; nay, I was told at Oxford that it was deemed impolite for any body to come in, who had no particular business there. As the disputants find it often very difficult to perform their exercises in Latin, it has been more than once proposed to substitute the English language; but this alteration has hitherto not taken place. At Cambridge, the exercises for the degree of bachelor, are more serious than at Oxford, and examinations in mathematics rhetoric, grammar, &c. follow after the disputation. They continue for three days together, though but a few hours each day. The usefulness of them, to ascertain the progress in learning of those who take their first degree, is undeniable; but they make only a part of the education at Cambridge.

The young student having obtained his first degree, is released from attending the instruction of the tutor, and should now continue his studies, by means of his own industry and private application. But many leave the university after this, and return, perhaps, only at the end of each term, to shew themselves as members of the university, and to retain the right to other academical degrees. Of these terms, annually four are kept at Oxford, and three at Cambridge; for the Easter term of the latter university includes the Trinity-term of the former. At Cambridge, therefore, is less vacation-time; and for that reason, as may be supposed, more industry.

On the number of terms, in which the members of these universities have attended, depends their progress in rising to academical degrees. After having obtained that of a bachelor of arts, twelve terms, or three years more are required at Oxford to become a master of arts, and to be received into the academical senate. To be created a doctor of civil law requires at Oxford five, and a doctor of physic three years more. At Cambridge it is one year less. The degree of doctor in divinity cannot be obtained in so short a space of time. A master of arts must wait seven years before he  
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can claim the degree of bachelor in divinity, and four more to be created a doctor. We have in our universities in Germany doctors in philosophy, a degree which the English universities have not; but they create another kind of doctors, of which we know nothing; I mean doctors of music.

The two English universities think very highly of their academical degrees, and will not admit any graduate of another university, *ad eundem* as it is called, in theirs; except those who have received their degrees at the episcopal college at Dublin. The archbishop of Canterbury has the right of creating doctors in divinity by diploma; but the two universities look upon such as have received their degree in this manner, by no means in so honourable a light, as those who, by mere length of time, have been raised to such a dignity by them. Yet, many of those whom they, with a kind of sneer, call Lambeth-doctors, are men of greater merit and learning than some of the university-doctors can boast. Sometimes honorary degrees are given, but very seldom accompanied by a diploma; by which means those upon whom this honour is conferred, are excluded from sitting and voting in the academical senate, or convocation. Mosheim, when he had translated Cudworth's



worth's *Intellectual System* into Latin, with valuable notes and additions of his own, was created a master of arts by the university of Cambridge, though he at that time was already a doctor in divinity, and an eminent professor in one of our universities. Father Courayer was, in 1727, made a doctor in divinity at Oxford, by diploma, because he had written in favour of the English episcopal ordinations; but, I presume, he would not have received a diploma, if the university had thought that he would have come over to England; though, so far as I know, Courayer never made use of the privileges to which his diploma entitled him.

Both English universities are provided with a number of professorships, founded by various patrons, and at various times. They are enumerated in books which are easily to be procured, and, therefore, I shall decline giving any account of them here. Salaries are annexed to them, and some are very considerable; but those who enjoy them hold generally other places of emolument besides. The labour of the professors is very easy, and in no respect to be compared to the drudgery of those in our universities. The lectures which they read are very few, and generally very little attended by the students. The celebrated Dodwell, when he

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was professor of history at Oxford, read within three years, two and twenty lectures; and it was thought that he excelled in industry. In our universities, one single professor reads as many in one week only. Perhaps, it is because these professorships are almost sinecures, that they are frequently disposed of by favour, and not always given to the most deserving candidate. It is to be regretted, and is certainly not for the credit of the universities, that no reform takes place in regard to these professorships and lectures, and the statutes of the university concerning them, of which they stand so much in need.

The number of those, who study in these universities, is not so great as is commonly thought on the continent. The English, at least at present, are more addicted to trade and commerce, to agriculture and manufactures, to the navy and army, than to the sciences, particularly those which may be called speculative. Money is the general desire, and since Mercury can procure it sooner than Minerva, he has of course the preference. The universities are not so full as formerly; which, in my opinion, is not to be regretted. Learning and sciences would be far more respectable, and more valued, if only the tenth part of those existed, who  
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have frequented universities, and who appropriate to themselves the name of learned. It ought to be likewise remembered, that only those of the episcopal church resort to these universities, and that other sects in England have likewise their academies and learned seminaries. It is certainly fabulous, that under the reign of Henry III. no less than thirty thousand students were to be found at Oxford. This is so much the more incredible, as Oxford has hardly the circumference of Leipzig, and but a few colleges were then erected. It is calculated, that, in full term-time, Oxford, upon the whole, contains about fifteen hundred members of the university, and Cambridge somewhat less. Of under-graduates there may be at Oxford perhaps six hundred, and at Cambridge about five hundred. Sometimes, but not very frequently, it happens, that in term-time some colleges cannot contain all those who belong to it, and in that case only it is permitted to take lodgings at the houses of citizens.

The students in these colleges are distinguished by the manner in which they are supported. Those who live at their own expence are called commoners; those who are upon foundations, or are exhibitioners, because they are supported by exhibitions or stipends, go  
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generally under the name of scholars ; and lastly those, who, on account of their necessitous condition, must submit to what may be called *officia servilia*, and are maintained by the college where they receive instruction in common with the others, are styled servitors at Oxford, and fizaras at Cambridge. A servitor's place is often sought for as a favour, and is not to be obtained without some friends. There have been many instances wherein servitors have turned out men of learning and celebrity ; nay, have raised themselves to the highest preferments in the church. All these three classes of students are distinguished by the difference in their dress, besides their manner of living, and the treatment which they receive. The commoners live not only in a higher style, but are likewise treated by their tutors with much lenity and indulgence, sometimes with familiarity. The scholars are nearly upon the same footing ; but the servitors with whom many of the commoners will not associate, experience sometimes hardships, to which they must submit in silence, or against which they have no redress. For, though even the beggars in London are the most impertinent set of people, yet, these servitors, who had perhaps only the misfortune of being born of poor parents, must verify, until they have taken  
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the degree of batchelor of arts, what Juvenal says :

. . . Plurima sunt quæ

Non audent homines pertufa dicere læna.

Those who are received in the college, as king's or other scholars, upon foundation, or who enjoy exhibitions, are sometimes sons of opulent parents, and their treatment is as mild as perhaps that of servitors has the appearance of rigour.

The life led by many who are members of these universities, is not deserving of much praise. An ingenious author, who is still living, and who himself was of the university of Oxford, expresses himself rather strongly on this subject, when he says : “ I saw in our universities, immorality, habitual drunkenness, idleness, ignorance, and vanity, openly and boastingly obtruding themselves on public view<sup>2</sup>. ” It is to be hoped, that there are not many instances which confirm this assertion ; though it cannot be denied that the number of those is not very small, who bring much wildness along with them even from school, which they afterwards greatly increase. Perhaps some of the fellows in these colleges are liable to censure too ; and it is as-

<sup>2</sup> Knox on *Liberal Education*. London, 1783. Sixth edit. p. 367.

ferted,

ferted, that they who cultivate languages and sciences, who love retirement and study, do by no means constitute a majority. Mr. Blackburn, who himself was educated at Cambridge, relates in his celebrated book *The Confessional*<sup>3</sup>, “ that the eminent Dr. Prideaux had proposed, among other necessary regulations in these seats of learning, to have a new college erected in each, by the name of *Drone-Hall*, for reasons there specified, by no means honourable to these academical bodies.” Some have thought, that there was no necessity of being at the expence of erecting such a new college, but only to exchange the names of some that have been built long ago. There are not a few fellows, and masters of arts, who spend their evenings either out of the college, or in their common or combination-room, where the conversation does not frequently relate to learning and the sciences. Neither the Bodleian or university library, nor those belonging to the colleges, are much frequented; and the ingenious author of the *Companion to the Oxford Guide*<sup>4</sup>, has laid open the far more easy road, which the students at Oxford take, to improve in the arts and sciences. Many of the Abelards, who live in these colleges,

<sup>3</sup> P. 437 not. p, third edit. 1770.

<sup>4</sup> P. 11. fourth edit.

keep their Eloifas, perhaps not always very privately, in the town or in the neighbourhood; though the laws of the university in this respect are pretty strict. They are particularly fond of taking trips to London, where they indulge themselves liberally in the pleasures of the metropolis. A short play, called the *Oxonian in Town*, which is not unfrequently acted on the London theatres, represents their manner of living in lively colours, but it is said, that they are not yet sufficiently strong. It was not long since proposed in parliament, to pass an act, to give leave that the fellows of colleges, who originally derive their existence as such, from monastic institutions, though they do not make the vow of chastity, might marry, without losing their fellowships on committing the act of matrimony, provided they did not reside in the college; but the matter is dropped, and things remain as before. The reason, in all probability, is this, that fellowships would then not so frequently be vacant, and those who wish for them would either be disappointed, or be obliged to wait a long while before they could be provided.

It is evident from what I have said, that the two English universities do not come up to the idea, which is generally entertained of them

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on the continent. They were, as I have before observed, modelled upon a monastic plan; and it cannot, upon reflection, but excite surprise, that a nation, famous for wise regulations, and for learning, has not yet thought of reforming its universities, and substituting a better plan in the room of that, which obviously does not only contain many useless things, but even such as have a tendency to impede the progress of learning. The ancient foundations and endowments, together with the benefactions which these universities are from time to time enriched with, are so considerable, that infinitely more might be done with them, towards the promotion of literature and the sciences, than is now actually the case. Charges in idle fashions, alterations for the better, in trade, commerce, and manufactures, are very frequent in England; but they are brought about with difficulty in old institutions, which produce a large income, and are very comfortable to those persons, who, by means of such established revenues, are enabled to enjoy an easy life, without much labour and fatigue. Many of them, if an attempt for a salutary reform were made, would call it sacrilege, and be inclined even to cry out treason! merely because their laziness, avarice, and assumed authority, were threatened with



some danger. The universities and the established church are closely connected; the latter is, for good reasons, protected by the government; and thus, happily for all three, every thing remains, without reformation, upon the old footing. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge are good schools either of law or physic; so that those, who want to make proficiency in the common law, and wish to try their fortune in courts of judicature, are obliged to enter the inns of court in London; and physicians who are not satisfied merely with acquiring the title of doctor, by keeping a number of terms at Oxford or Cambridge, go to Scotch, or to foreign universities, to render themselves more skilful in their profession.

I have said enough of the interior complexion of the two English universities; and I shall only add a few observations, which relate to the exterior of them. The city of Oxford is, in situation and in houses, superior to Cambridge, though, in regard to colleges, both universities are, in my opinion, upon an equality. Cambridge has some that are very elegant and splendid; and as to the public buildings belonging to that university, such as the senate-house, the public library, and the schools, they, being modern erections, are superior to those of the same

same kind at Oxford. Both towns are irregularly built, and they were, when I first saw them, badly paved, and unclean; but this is altered since, and both have as fine a pavement as the best streets in London. A stranger, visiting these seats of learning, will find, that on approaching them, Oxford makes a much finer appearance than Cambridge, which lies in a plain. The distance of both universities from London is nearly the same; Oxford being fifty-seven, and Cambridge fifty-two miles distant. A foreigner, who thinks, that having seen Oxford, he may go from thence in a regular stage, or in a post-coach, to the other university, will meet with disappointment; there being no connexion or communication of that kind between them. Nay, I have met with many gentlemen, who had studied at Cambridge, or were fellows of colleges there, who had never in their lives been at Oxford; and of many Oxonians the same may be said with regard to Cambridge: so little connexion is there between these universities. Whoever comes from the continent, as a man of letters, and visits, on his travels in England, these seats of learning, having heard so much of the Bodleian library, will undoubtedly when he comes to Oxford, let this be one of the first objects to gratify his curiosity. He

will, however, in all probability, find that his expectations were raised rather too high, at least in regard to the building in which this literary treasure is contained. He will be still more surprized, when he finds an elegant roomy edifice, under the denomination of the Radcliffe-library, close by, with a few books only deposited in it. He will wonder, why the Bodleian library is not placed in this convenient and safe building, which might easily be fitted up with three times the number of book-cases that now are to be seen there; another gallery might likewise be easily erected, without spoiling the symmetry of the building; and the under part of the building, which serves at present merely for room for the winds to play and to howl in, might be, with great propriety, fitted up for the reception of at least the greatest part of the Arundelian and Pomfret marbles. The present rooms, in which the Bodleian library is placed, are over the Divinity-school. They are in the form of a Roman H, of which I took the dimensions when I was last at Oxford, and found that the length of the middle walk, from one window to the other, was about seventy-four of my paces, and each of the two others on the side, forty-two; the breadth of a walk was about twelve. A gallery above, with proper reposi-

repositories, contains the greatest part of the manuscripts. When I saw this library for the first time, the books, at least below, were chained to the shelves; but they are since set at liberty. There is no doubt that this is, if not the very first, certainly one of the best libraries any where to be met with; and as to old manuscripts, it surpasses all others. Sir Thomas Bodley was not, properly speaking, the first founder of it; but rather Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, who finished, long before, the uncompleted building, and gave many printed books, as well as manuscripts. Bodley, however, spent afterwards almost his whole fortune upon this library, which is said to have cost him no less than 17,000 l. He has shewn what a rich man, possessed of good sense and a good will, may do, if he has a desire to be useful. Perhaps thousands, who were richer than him, had studied at Oxford, and none of them, though they frequently offered costly sacrifices to folly and vanity, had any thought of erecting so honourable a monument as Bodley has done, for which, no doubt, some ambitious men have envied him. He has had, however, followers, who have trodden in his steps. Archbishop Laud, an earl of Pembroke, sir Thomas Roe, and sir Kenelm Digby, were great benefactors to this library.

library. They collected manuscripts wherever they could, in all parts of the world, and furnished it with them. Within a few years it may be far more valuable, in regard to printed books, than it was formerly. Modern books were much wanting, particularly foreign ones; and the university has but lately instituted a fund, which will amply supply the expences to remedy this defect. Of all the new books, which are entered at Stationer's-hall in London, a copy is to be delivered for the Bodleian, as well as for the university-library at Cambridge.

All those solemnities, commemorations, and academical promotions, which at Cambridge are performed in the senate-house, take place at Oxford in the Sheldonian theatre; a noble edifice, built towards the close of the last century, by sir Christopher Wren, at the expence of Gilbert Sheldon, archbishop of Canterbury, who was then chancellor of the university.

The Ashmolean museum was of more importance before it was, if I may use the expression, eclipsed by the British Museum, and the collection of sir Ashton Lever. Notwithstanding, there are many valuable things to be seen here, which still entitle it to the attention of the curious,

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The university press was formerly under the Sheldonian theatre, for which reason the books printed there in ancient languages, bore on the title-page, the words, *E Typographæo Sheldoniano*; but since the magnificent Clarendon printing-house was erected, about the year 1711, books have no longer been printed at the Theatre, and the above words are changed into, *E Typographæo Clarendoniano*. I have observed already in another place, that many valuable and costly publications, particularly such as relate to Eastern literature, owe their appearance to this press. They would never, perhaps, have been in the hands of the learned, or become ornaments to libraries, if the university had not liberally furnished the expences for their publication.

The botanical or physic-garden was instituted by the earl of Danby, but afterwards much improved by Dr. Sherrard, who had resided many years at Smyrna. He stocked the garden with valuable and numerous exotics, brought from distant climates. He founded a professorship for botany, and built a house for the reception of a botanical library, in which the professor should also reside. This garden, together with the Radcliffe Infirmary, which was first opened in the year 1770, might be very good schools for those who study physic in this uni-

versity, but it is said that there is a want of good regulations.

An observatory, built upon an extensive and a well adapted plan, has lately been erected. It is furnished with an excellent and complete set of astronomical instruments; and I sincerely wish, that astronomy, may, in time, reap many advantages from so noble an institution.

I shall not enter into a minute description of the different colleges, either of this university or that of Cambridge. There are many books, easily to be procured, which give an ample account of them<sup>5</sup>.

Cambridge, as I have before observed, is situated in a plain, and its air is thought to be salubrious; the north, and north-east winds are, however, apt to produce agues among the inhabitants. The town is very indifferently built, and the colleges, by which it is encompassed, are almost its only ornaments. The best view of it is from a hill close by, upon which, in former times, a castle was built, the remains of which now make the county gaol. St. Mary's church is that of the university, and has, both

<sup>5</sup> For the benefit of my countrymen, the Germans, I have inserted in the original a short description of each of the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, which it would be superfluous to translate here.

as to in and outside, a better appearance than that at Oxford of the same name, in which likewise the sermons are preached before the university on Sundays and holidays. Near it, on the north-side, is the senate-house, a magnificent building, which serves for the same purposes as the Sheldonian theatre at Oxford. Opposite the church are the schools and the public library, which constitute likewise an elegant modern building, well-planned, and of a handsome appearance. If the south-side of this quadrangle, opposite to the senate-house, was likewise adorned with a building corresponding with the rest, the whole would make a very neat little square, highly ornamental to the university. It was in contemplation to do so, when I was the last time at Cambridge. Under the library are the schools, and the room in which the natural curiosities, collected by the late Dr. Woodward, are deposited in the best order. The public library consists of four galleries, each of which takes up one side of the building, which is quadrangular, and has a court within. Of the printed books, which are very numerous, a catalogue was printed, and the new books which have been purchased since, are added in writing. A small square-room, enlightened by a cupola, contains the manuscripts ;  
a good



a good collection of the first editions of the Greek and Latin classics, and most of the works of William Caxton, who was the first printer in England. I need not mention, that here, among the manuscripts, the famous *Codex Bezae* is to be found, of which an edition, in fac-simile letters, like that published lately of the New Testament of the Alexandrian manuscript, is preparing for the press. There is a written and well arranged catalogue of the manuscripts belonging to this library. Gentlemen belonging to the university, after they have taken their first degree, may borrow books out of this library, on leaving a memorandum with their names, and have them home for their perusal. This is not the case at Oxford, where no book or manuscript in the Bodleian library is lent out; and whoever wishes to peruse one is obliged to do it on the spot. When I was at Cambridge, I was offered, with the greatest kindness, to have such books sent me, as I wanted out of the library, to the inn where I lodged; and I cannot help acknowledging here, with particular pleasure, the politeness, and the very friendly reception, which I met with from the learned and worthy Dr. Farmer, master of Emmanuel college, who was the principal librarian, when I visited some years ago that university.

The

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The botanical garden has been instituted only within these thirty years. It is nearly of the same dimensions as that at Oxford; but things appeared to me to be here in better order than there; and a very fine green-house contains a number of exotic plants. Thomas Martin, professor of Botany at Cambridge, has published a catalogue of what this garden contains<sup>6</sup>, which is arranged according to the Linnæan system.

Cambridge cannot boast of such an observatory, as that which is lately added to the splendour of Oxford; but there is an observatory over the great gate of Trinity college, where sir Isaac Newton used to make his observations.

<sup>6</sup> *Catalogus Horti Botanici Cantabrigiæ.* 1772.

## SCOTCH

## SCOTCH UNIVERSITIES.

**T**HERE are four universities in Scotland ; at Edinburgh, at Glasgow, at Aberdeen, and at St. Andrew's. The preference is to be given, in many respects, to these universities before the English ; and Scotland has produced, within these modern times, learned men and writers of great reputation, who cannot but excite the jealousy of their southern neighbours. Dr. Johnson<sup>7</sup>, indeed, is of opinion, that the students in the Scotch universities learn there but little, because they go to them at too early an age, and leave them again before they arrive at manhood. This accusation, however, is one of those numerous proofs that he saw, on his travels in Scotland, too many things through the spectacles of prejudice. As far as I know, very few Scotch youths go to their universities at so early an age as is generally the case in England ; and if they remain there, perhaps, three years, and make good use of their time, and of the instruction given by so many eminent

<sup>7</sup> Journey to the Western Islands, p. 375.

men,

men, who read their lectures with care and assiduity, I do not see why they should not learn at least as much as a student in an English university, under a single tutor. What are called in English universities *Terms*, go in Scotland under the name of *Sessions*. They last generally eight months, from the beginning of October, to the beginning of June, when the vacation takes place. I look upon this regulation to be preferable to that of the English universities, because the studies of the young men are not so frequently interrupted, by an absence from the university, and repeated vacations within the year.

If the Scotch universities are to be mentioned according to the time when they were first founded, that of St. Andrew's stands the first; being instituted in the year 1411. There were formerly three colleges here, but at present only two, since that of St. Salvator and that of St. Leonard are united. The new college, which is called St. Mary's, was founded in the year 1553, and has a principal. The university and the town, which were formerly in a flourishing situation, are said at present to be much in decline, and the whole number of students, is, as I have been informed, only about an hundred. This, perhaps, is the more to be wondered at, since

since the town is agreeably situated, the living very cheap, and the cold in winter not so intense by far as at Copenhagen, though the latitude of both places is nearly the same. The expences of a student, during a whole session, if he be not extravagant, are said to be only between fifteen and twenty pounds. The university has a chancellor, two principals or heads of the colleges, and eleven professors, between whom the lectures on all the principal branches of science are divided.

Glasgow follows next; for the university there was founded about the year 1454. There is a college here also, but the students do not reside in it; they live in lodgings, or in the houses of the citizens, as is the custom with our students in Germany and those in Holland. Many of them are lodged and boarded in the houses of the professors; but the expences are then pretty high. The number of students in this university amounts to about four hundred, who are instructed by fourteen professors; some of them are for the Greek, the Hebrew, the Oriental languages, and Belles Lettres. The public library of this university is said to contain good books, and some manuscripts.

Aberdeen has two colleges. The one was founded in the year 1477 by James I. and is called

called King's-college. It has a chancellor, a rector, a principal, and seven professors. The other is called Marischal-college, in New-Aberdeen, it being founded by an earl marischal, about the year 1593. Here are likewise a chancellor, a rector, a principal, and seven professors. Attempts have been more than once made to unite both these colleges, so as to make but one, which, it is thought, would be very beneficial to both. I have not heard, that this salutary union has hitherto taken place.

Edinburgh, the fourth and principal university in Scotland, is of the year 1582. It has a college, but the students live as at Glasgow, in the houses of the citizens, and their dress has nothing distinguishing. The number of them is said to be between six and seven hundred, with whose instruction no less than twenty-three professors are occupied. Each branch of literature and science is well provided for; but particularly the medical. Edinburgh has been, for many years past, one of the best schools for young physicians; and, therefore, almost half the number of students that frequent the university, are said to be in the medical line. Many of them are foreigners, and some from

**America.** The public library, which belongs to the university, is sufficiently numerous, but deficient in modern books.

I have already observed, in another place, that the professors in the Scotch universities, take much pains in instructing the young students, and generally read their lectures with great assiduity. And, indeed, this is very necessary, for the endowments of their universities are but indifferent; and besides, the small salaries, annexed to the professorships, the fees received from the scholars make a great part of their emoluments. They, therefore, must take much pains, as their subsistence is necessarily connected with their learning, their reputation, and their assiduity.

Though the Scotch students do not seem under that restraint, and close observation, as those in English universities; yet, I have not heard, and I do not believe, that their behaviour, and their manner of life is more extravagant, or more blameable, than of those at Oxford or Cambridge. The merit, however, and the surprize, in this respect, lessens, when it is considered, that the Scotch students have not so much money to spend as the English generally have, and that luxury is not yet arrived  
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at that height in Scotland, to which it is carried in England.

Of the schools and academical colleges among the Dissenters in England, I shall say more, when I treat on the state of religion in this country.



ON THE STATE OF ARTS IN  
ENGLAND.

THE arts, of which I am speaking here, are not those which are called mechanical or useful, but those which are known under the name of fine, polite, or liberal arts. In treating on this subject, I do not lay the most distant claim to the title of a connoisseur in these things. My senses, my feelings, common understanding, and hints from a few who are conversant in these arts, shall be my only guides.

Montesquieu, du Bos, Winckelman, and others, have denied that the English had any natural genius for the fine arts. Physical causes, which are attributed to the climate of the island, are said to be in the fault. The English pass with them for good mechanics, with a compass and plumb-rule in their hand; but they deny that they are possessed of genius and taste for these arts. The English, they say, can calculate well, but their imagination is without life, and their feelings are blunt with respect to what

is beautiful in the arts. I shall by no means enter into a disquisition, how far these accusations have any foundation, much less shall I presume to decide whether they are just or unjust. Thus far I will boldly assert, that the English, at present, in mechanical arts, surpass all other nations. Real use, and what is best adapted to obtain the end in view, is that which chiefly engages their attention in works of industry. A Frenchman wishes to shew his taste; he makes good designs, and draws excellent patterns; but an Englishman, when he is to execute them, does it in a manner far superior to the Frenchman, though the inventor. Besides, the climate has, in my opinion, by no means that great influence which some have pretended, on the character, on the manner of thinking and acting of inhabitants of different countries. The climate of Great Britain is never so bad, or so obnoxious to genius and talents for arts, as many on the continent have gravely asserted, even in their writings. There are at present among the English eminent painters, some very good engravers, and other ingenious artists; perhaps, future times may produce greater numbers.

The reasons why the arts have not made a considerable progress in England, and why the Bri-

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tons remained behind some other nations, are various. The character of the nation was already formed, when they began to sacrifice to the finer arts. This, even among the English themselves, is assigned as one of the principal causes, why they have not met with a warmer reception, and have not risen to a greater perfection. The Reformation, in the sixteenth century, is also blamed for obstructing in the nation, the exertions of genius for painting and music. In Italy, and in other Roman catholic countries, the decoration of churches with paintings, and the music as well as the singing in them, have greatly contributed towards promoting the arts. In Great Britain, the walls of the temples are bare, the churches and meeting-houses are without decorations, and most of the psalms, which are sung in honour of the Deity, have, perhaps, no more melody in them, than the songs of the bards of old. I have already mentioned, in another place, that eminent painters, such as a Reynolds, a West, and others, have offered to ornament the cathedral of St. Paul with paintings, but that the Gothic religious prejudices of a bishop rejected their proposal. The large halls of corporations, and trading companies, are, in general, as void of decorations by the arts,

as the members which assemble in them are often void of taste, eating and drinking excepted. These societies, particularly in London, and other commercial towns in England, are generally rich, and have therefore the best opportunities and means to encourage the art of painting, sculpture, and statuary; but when they assemble, a table profusely set out with costly dishes, and a side-board well stored with various sorts of wine, has infinitely more charms for them, than all the master-pieces of painting and sculpture that might decorate their halls, attract the eye of the beholder, and enrapture the admirer of the arts. They would look upon the sum paid to an artist, for ornamenting their hall with an excellent picture, as a most idle and unpardonable expence; they would enquire how many fine haunches of venison, how many well-fed turkeys, how many delicious turtles, how many dozens of excellent old wine might have been bought for such a sum? It is the more extraordinary, that these corporations and societies have not, even from Epicurean principles, and æconomical motives, entertained the thought of decorating their halls with good paintings, and thereby accidentally called forth and encouraged a genius for arts, since the trifle which is

paid for seeing the painted hall at Greenwich, has already produced not less than 20,000*l*. How many more good dinners might the members of such corporations and companies enjoy, if they erected a similar fund at the expence of the curiosity of strangers! But to speak seriously; might it not be asked, why these rich societies give no encouragement to the artist, or opportunities to genius to exert itself, when either want of riches in churches cannot, or bigotry and prejudice will not do it. Foreigners are told much of the public spirit of the English, which, as it is said, operates so powerfully for the honour of the nation, and is directed to the noblest purposes; but if it really existed, in the manner which is pretended, why does it not shew itself more in such things, which might be deemed not only useful and ornamental, but also such as are intimately connected with the reputation of the nation, as far as it lays claim to arts and sciences? If the churches be shut against the arts, why should palaces and public buildings not give them a liberal entrance?

It is an observation, which history confirms, that liberty has not always promoted arts and sciences. They began to flourish most among the Greeks when the republics fell into decay,  
and

and when tyranny lifted up its head. The times when Rome began to lose its freedom, were the most favourable to the arts, and the reign of Augustus is justly celebrated for them. Arts and sciences never shone with greater lustre in modern times than during the reign of Louis XIV. Liberty is most favourable to trade and commerce. Of this the English nation affords the strongest evidence. The spirit of gambling and commerce are nearly related; to gain riches by means of genius and enthusiasm for the arts, is exceedingly precarious. It is far more easy to obtain a fortune as a tradesman or merchant, assisted with the good luck of a gambler, and his not always very honest maxims. No wonder, therefore, if the greatest part of the English, whose *summum bonum* is money, are tasteless in the arts, and treat them with neglect, or even look upon them with a kind of disdain; no wonder if a tradesman or merchant, favoured by liberty, regards the accumulation of money above all, and considers a man of talents and learning, or an artist endowed with excellent genius, as beings far below him. Most of those who exhibit themselves between two or three o'clock, with greedy and envious eyes, on the Royal Exchange, think the images of the British kings

on the guineas, and the white figures in the black spot upon bank notes, to be the most excellent and most pleasing productions of the arts. As for the rest it is, in the eyes of the generality of them, little better than trash.

Modern English writers, who are well acquainted with the subject of which I am speaking, have given, without hesitation, with respect to the imitative arts, the preference to the French before the English. In a letter to sir Joshua Reynolds, by Mr. Valentine Green<sup>s</sup>, it is asserted, that the arts are much more patronized in France than in England. He praises Louis XIV. and Colbert, as the first who raised them to any considerable height in that kingdom. He asserts, that the protection and encouragement which the arts have received in France, are not only very great, but even so durable, that they can be shaken only by the greatest convulsions in the state. According to this, it might be supposed, that Mr. Green had no great opinion of the Royal Academy in England, instituted about twenty years ago; and that he does not look upon it as so great, durable, and useful an institution, as some, per-

<sup>s</sup> A Review of the polite Arts in France, compared with their present State in England; in a Letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds, by Valentine Green, London, 1782, 4to.

haps,

haps, may be apt to think. In my opinion, however, this royal establishment has produced already many good effects, towards reforming the taste of the English with regard to the polite arts. It is true, that the artists of genius, who have started up since its institution, are not very numerous; but, certainly, some have been called forth, who otherwise, perhaps, might have been buried in obscurity. That the first has not happened is not the fault of the academy; for it is not in its power to create genius, or to distribute talents.

The yearly exhibition of the Royal Academy, in Somerset-place, is considered by some as a kind of barometer of the progress of painting, sculpture, and architecture in England; though it is said not to be very favourable, because, according to those who pretend to be connoisseurs, it has sunk for several years past, and the exertions of genius are supposed to decrease.

It is rather singular, that most of those who have excelled in the polite arts in England, have been foreigners. This is by no means owing to the great encouragement given them by the English, who are not very much inclined to encourage strangers, except they be fidlers, dancers, or singers. A foreign artist, though a  
man



man of talents, has many difficulties to struggle with, arising from his not being born on the island: The English painters travel frequently, either at their own expence or otherwise supported, into France and Italy ; but they return, too often, without having much cultivated or refined their taste ; and it is therefore not to be wondered at, that few of them shine afterwards. From whatever cause this may arise, whether from the usual extravagant way of life which they generally lead, particularly in foreign countries, or from that want of genius with which they are charged, I shall not presume to decide.

Italy draws yearly considerable sums from England, not only by means of her singers, castratos, dancers, and musicians, but likewise by her productions of the arts. Rich lords and others, whose understanding and taste are, perhaps, exceeded by their money, give commissions for buying up paintings, statues, and antiquities, for considerable sums, and have them brought over to England, to ornament their London residences and their country-seats. In my opinion, those who send these sums to Italy, would do better to apply at least a part of them, as an encouragement for their own countrymen, who discover a genius for the fine arts,  
instead

instead of giving so much money to Italian painters, who, besides, impose too frequently upon the ignorant, by selling copies only instead of originals. No man can justly be considered as an enlightened patriot, or a patron of the polite arts, who merely purchases the celebrated works of foreign artists, without giving himself any trouble to encourage the production of similar works in his own country.

I have had frequently occasion to observe, that some of the owners of such works of art, appear to enjoy the possession of them without much liberality of mind, and with little inclination to communicate the pleasure which they may afford to others. Many town-residences and country-seats of noblemen, and persons of opulence, are by no means inferior to those of the Romans; where, according to Juvenal's description,

. . . Cum Parrhasii tabulis signisque Myronis  
Phidiacum vivebat ebur, nec non Polycleti  
Multus ubique labor. SAT. VIII. v. 102.

But it seems as if the owners of such costly things, which belong to luxury and splendor, thought themselves perfectly happy, merely  
because

because they can say that they are the possessors of them. In France and Italy, the rich, to whom some scarce and valuable monuments of the arts belong, seem rather obliged to him who thinks it worth his while to come to see, and to admire them; but, in England, he is sometimes given to understand, that he lies under a kind of obligation to the master of the house, if he permits him to see it, and to reward the servant, who shewed him about, with a crown, or half a guinea. It seems to be a characteristical part of this class of Englishmen, to gratify their pride and vain self-love in this point, and to value themselves merely, because they have things which others have not, and which are costly; though it is frequently no concern of theirs, whether they have an intrinsic value or not. Hence it arises, that England, in some respects, may be considered as a kind of lumber-room, where the refuse of the fine arts among the Italians, French, and Flemings, is collected and sold for high prices. Many of those in London, who, as auctioneers, with the hammer in their hand, offer pictures at public sales, assume the character of perfect judges of their value, of their beauty, and of the masters, as if they were possessed of the greatest knowledge, and the most exquisite taste

taste in things relating to the arts. Their judgments, however, and their decisions, which would often make a true connoisseur smile, are received like oracles, by those who have their money ready for the purchase. Thus many old pictures covered with smoke, and many that are executed by obscure artists, are sold for pieces of Rubens; and many opulent dilettanti are enabled to enrich their collections with the works of a Raphael, a Carache, a Titian, a Poussin, and others, merely because it has pleased the auctioneer to father inferior productions upon these great artists, and thereby to disgrace their celebrated names. I have seen pictures among the collections of noble lords and others, which, as I was told, had cost four or five hundred guineas, though men who are well acquainted with the true value of such things, have assured me, that they were not worth half the money. Some English painters, it is said, turn this singular and frequently very ill-founded predilection of their countrymen for foreign paintings, to their own advantage. They send, unknown, some of their works to the continent, and have them as foreign productions re-imported; they enter them at the custom-house as such, and pay the duties,

which

which are rather high. Notwithstanding all these expences, they sell them afterwards at a much higher price than what they would have fetched, if it had been known that they were the works of English artists.

I shall now speak more particularly and distinctly on those arts, which are generally called polite, after having first said a few words on a society erected to promote them, under the name of a *Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, which was instituted in the year 1754. Some patriots, and promoters of what is good and useful, united together, to raise voluntary contributions among themselves, to give rewards to those that exerted themselves in useful inventions and improvements, relating to the fine arts, to manufactures, and commerce. It might have been expected, that a society, whose views were so noble, and whose generosity in rewarding was so beneficial to the state, would have been taken under the fostering protection of government, and been supported to the utmost; but no such thing happened. It was from the liberality of private persons; it was the good genius of Great Britain, by whom all this was done for the benefit of the public and the honour of the nation;

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nation; nay, of all mankind. It could never be too much regretted, if this society should ever cease for want of support. With an income, of perhaps, 4000 l. it has done an infinite deal of good. Many young rising geniusses in the art of painting, statuary, and architecture, have met with encouragement from this society; and it has also rendered great services to agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. And if so much good could be done with so small a sum, raised by a few patriots, how much more might have been expected, if government had supported them? If assistance had been afforded by the parliament, which, within a century, has voted more than five hundred millions of money out of the people's pockets, perhaps, not always for the benefit and happiness of the nation?

The number of the members of this society is uncertain, since some die, others are struck off from the list, when they do not pay their subscription, and others are new chosen. Hence it is, that the yearly revenues of the society are unequal. A few years ago it was apprehended, that these times of luxury and dissipation, when patriotism is rather sickly, had thrown it into a decline; but I am happy to say,

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, that it has recovered itself, and is at present in a flourishing situation?

If this society, the usefulness of which is deniable, should have the proper influence on the nation, it would be necessary, in order to render it more extensively beneficial, to institute another society, which should offer premiums to those who would adopt the useful inventions and improvements made known by the former society, and put them into practice in common use. There are not wanting hardly in any

country, wise and patriotic men, who wish to improve the arts, and to lessen labour, and the burdens of life; but it really requires often more skill to persuade people, and the bulk of mankind, who are ignorant and self-conceited, to adopt useful inventions and improvements, than to invent them. I have seen

the house of the Society a large chamber, containing models for machines and tools to make labour easy, and to save time and trouble; but how much is it to be lamented, that most of them are confined to this room, when they should be met with in the fields, in the habitations of the industrious poor, and in the

Here follows, in the German original, a more circumstantial account of this society, which, being well known in this country, is here omitted.

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workshops of artisans. Nay, even many of those who should be wiser, and whose duty it is to promote, by their authority, useful inventions and rational improvements, because they are paid for it by the state, decline rendering this service to the public, either from ignorance, or from indolence. The Society has a house in the Adelphi-Buildings, where the members meet every Wednesday, at five o'clock in the evening, from the fourth Wednesday in October to the first Wednesday in June. The refection of this house cost the Society four thousand pounds, and it was expected that government would have defrayed the expences; but no such thing has happened. In the house are, besides other apartments, an elegant room where the meetings of the Society are held, and the large chamber mentioned before, where numbers of models of various kinds are kept. The great room is ornamented with a series of historical and allegorical paintings, executed, in a most masterly style, by Mr. James Barry. In one of the lesser rooms I have seen a collection of books, which, however, on account of its smallness, can hardly be called a library. The Society has published seven volumes of its Transactions.



## 194 ON THE STATE OF, &c.

I shall only mention, that in other parts of the kingdom attempts have been made to promote the arts. Thus, for instance, there was instituted at Liverpool, in the year 1773, a *Society for the Encouragement of Designing, Drawing, and Painting, &c.* but I have not heard that it has met with great success.

PAINT:

## P A I N T I N G.

IT is but of late, that England has possessed painters of eminence who were natives of the country. Formerly the painters in England of any celebrity, were mostly foreigners. *Vertue's Anecdotes of Painting*, published by Mr. Horace Walpole, will sufficiently evince this assertion. The abbé Winckelman, however, if he had written his *History of the Arts among the Ancients*, at the present time, would not have dared to assert, that England had not produced one single painter of celebrity <sup>10</sup>, since a Reynolds, a West, a Gainsborough, and many others, have done great credit and honour to their profession. There are, perhaps, some who will agree with him, when he says, that all the descriptions in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the love scenes of the first pair in paradise only excepted, are like well painted Gorgons, which bear a resemblance to each other, and are always equally frightful. But this certainly is not owing, as Winckelman supposes, to the

<sup>10</sup> Vol. i. p. 20. German edit.

climate of England. Thomson, who was born much more northerly than Milton, has, in his celebrated poem, *The Seasons*, such picturesque descriptions, as would furnish subjects for the most pleasing pictures. And how many other English poets might be mentioned, whose powers of imagination have drawn the most beautiful scenes, in which the skill of able painters might be successfully employed. Among the inhabitants of England, numbers of handsome men and women are to be met with, the country is full of fine prospects, and romantic views; why then should it be impossible for the Britons to arrive at a high degree of eminence in painting? Who knows, but that future ages may give to England painters, perhaps, not inferior to those of which Greece or Italy can boast? If the climate did inspire, why have not the modern Greeks a Zeuxis, an Apelles, a Protogenes, an Apollodorus? Why is there nobody among them, who can use the chissel like a Phidias, a Praxiteles, a Polycletes? The climate is still the same, and yet no such artists now appear.

During the present reign, the arts of painting, sculpture, engraving, and architecture, have certainly risen to a considerable height. This, in no small degree, is owing to the Royal

Academy, which was instituted in the year 1769. Some artists, painters, and statuaries, who had instituted a society before, may be considered as the origin and foundation of this royal academy.

It exhibits the new productions of its members and associates every year, in the month of May. The exhibition rooms in Somerset-place, are at that time often so crowded with gentlemen and ladies, with pretended connoisseurs and supercilious critics, who all come to stare at the pictures that, in the middle of the day some ladies are ready to faint, on account of the heat of the rooms, and the powerful perfumes of the odoriferous company with which they are filled.

Whoever pays a shilling at the entrance, may go in, and is, besides, furnished with a catalogue of the exhibition. This catalogue not only informs him of the artists who have executed every production he sees before him, but also that a portrait, which attracts his attention, and of which he wants to know a little more, is that of a gentleman and not of a lady; or he is told, that the animals which he sees painted before him, are horses or dogs; or that such a picture is intended for a landscape, and not for a sea-piece. I own, I have often wondered,

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why

why the composers of such catalogues do not gratify the curiosity of the spectators, in regard to portraits, by adding the name of those for whom they are intended, particularly since they may easily be learnt from the newspaper criticisms. Besides, though many a portrait is exhibited by the desire of the painter, which was granted by its owner, with a view to do him service; yet it may well be supposed, that a great number of those who have their portraits drawn, and suffer them to be exposed to public view, do it from a motive of vanity, and that it therefore would gratify their little pride, if the public were informed, that it was their effigy.

Those who want to see the exhibition of the principal paintings must not grudge the trouble of ascending two very high pair of stairs, before they reach the principal rooms. It excites, indeed, a little wonder, why it has not been contrived, to have this exhibition in a room not so high, with a dome or a sky-light, that the curious and the friends of the art, might satisfy their wishes for a pleasing sight, without being in the same predicament with those, who want to see a fine prospect, and are obliged first to mount, at the expence of their lungs, a lofty tower, or a high mountain. Those who want

to observe the heavens and the stars, in the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, remain on the ground; but, whoever wishes to contemplate the works of art among mortal men, is to ascend till he becomes breathless, as if they were only to be seen in a higher atmosphere. During the time of such annual exhibition, the London newspapers teem with criticisms upon the works of the painters. Some are just, and to the purpose, others are the production of ignorance, and not unfrequently of malice and of envy.

Before the academy had any apartments of their own, and were obliged to hire rooms for their exhibitions, nobody found fault that a shilling was demanded on entering them; but when those in Somerset-place were opened for the first time, and money was demanded, a great clamour was raised against it, and the public papers were very free and very severe in their censure. It was said to be a disgrace to the nation, and a dishonour to an academy which was called royal; the noise, however, soon subsided. And, indeed, there is no other, nor any better method, to keep the crowd of the populace out of the rooms, which, notwithstanding money is to be paid, are generally, in the middle of the day, very full. It is said, that in some years,

during the month of the exhibition, three thousand pounds have been collected by single shillings. By means of this money, a fund is established for the benefit of the society, to pay the professors, officers, and menial servants belonging to the academy, and to procure the necessary models, books, and prints, for the benefit of the pupils. In fact, therefore, the pockets of the people, as in a hundred other instances, are the support of the Royal Academy, of which foreigners, on account of its denomination, generally think that it is merely royal munificence which gave it existence, and which keeps it in being. Out of this same fund, some young English painters, as it is said, are supported in Italy, to render themselves there more perfect in their profession. I will not omit to mention, that paintings, which are presented to the public view in the exhibitions of the Royal Academy, are generally, if they are thought to be interesting, or if they acquire some applause, engraved, and thus multiplied.

The academy consists of forty members, who are called Royal Academicians. Painters, sculptors, and architects, are all comprehended under this denomination. Among these members are four royal professors, one  
for

for painting, one for anatomy, one for architecture, and one for perspective. A professor has no more than thirty pounds salary; but it ought to be remembered, that he is to read only six lectures for the benefit of the pupils, during the winter. Besides the royal academicians, there are associates and honorary members. These latter, now and then, expose their works before the public in the annual exhibitions. Their number is undetermined.

As the English are very fond of having their pictures drawn, it is no wonder that portraits constitute the greater part in the exhibitions of the Royal Academy, and that those painters are the most successful, and gain most money, who have acquired the fame of drawing good and pleasing likenesses. Sir Godfrey Kneller soon grew rich, and when he died, he left five hundred portraits unfinished behind, for which he had received, before-hand, half the price. When Vanloo came into England, and acquired some fame, as many coaches used to wait at his door, as perhaps were seen on court-days at St. James's. He likewise soon acquired a fortune. Formerly the price of a full-length portrait was twenty or thirty guineas; at present, eminent painters are paid an hundred and more. The fate of such portraits is oftentimes  
dole-



doleful. They are as transitory, and as mortal as the persons whom they are to represent, and to whom they were expected to procure a kind of immortality. The pictures of a couple, which were drawn most charmingly, just before the wedding-day, and were paid for with fifty or sixty guineas, wander frequently, a few years after the gentleman and lady are dead, into the lumber-room, up into the garret; if the nephews, or heirs, do not even dispose of them very cheap to a broker, in whose shop they remain a good while before he sells them for a few shillings profit. I am apprehensive, that many of those portraits, which have been very dearly paid for, and which I have seen in the exhibitions of the Royal Academy, will have met with the same fate, before half the next century is elapsed, though they have been admired, and came from the hands of artists, who now are called eminent. Pope, when he flattered his friend Jarvis with long duration of his portraits, and prophesied him,

Bloom in his colours for a thousand years,

did not expect that the painter and his portraits would be so soon forgotten, and their value so much lowered, within forty years after his death.

Sir

Sir James Thornhill was a painter whom the English justly esteem, though the abbé le Blanc says<sup>1</sup>, "that nature had refused him genius, and that a connoisseur would be puzzled to decide, not in what part the painter excelled, but what it was in which he was least faulty." The abbé pays in the same breath but a very indifferent compliment to the English, when he says of sir Godfrey Kneller, that this German shewed his judgment in choosing England for his place to exercise his talents in, it being the only country where he could possibly gain so much credit and honour; for no where else would the name of a painter have been bestowed upon him. However, though the abbé speaks much truth in many parts of his letters, yet his decisions are not greatly to be depended upon, when the liveliness of his temper gets the better of him, and when his partiality for his own country biases his judgment in favour of the French. Sir James Thornhill has undoubtedly merit, though it seems to be acknowledged, that before the American Mr. West, England had nobody who could be styled an eminent historical painter. Comparing the price of the labour of portrait-painters, such as Kneller and Vanloo, with that

<sup>1</sup> Letters on the English and French Nations, vol. i. let. xiii.

which

which was paid to Thornhill, it did, indeed, reflect no great honour upon the English at that time, that they rewarded so indifferently the merits of their own countryman. He received only two pounds sterling for a square foot, when he painted the dome of St. Paul. Hogarth, who married his only daughter, against the consent of her father, was certainly an original, and a master in his art of drawing caricatures, which he himself used likewise to engrave. Le Blanc acknowledges, that he was a man of genius in his way, but he will not pronounce him to be a painter. Since Hogarth's time, of whom the English have reason to be proud, the taste for caricatures in England has increased amazingly; probably because it gratifies to a high degree that turn for satire, which is prevalent among the generality of the nation, and which delights more in that which is overdone, than in that which shews refinement, pointed delicacy, and real wit.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, who is at the head of the Royal Academy, and their president, must be pronounced to be the first painter in England at present, and at the same time the greatest in his art, which this island ever produced. Mr. Horace Walpole is of opinion, that Italy has not at present any painter, who can pretend to

rival

rival an imagination so fertile, and that the attitudes of his portraits are as various as those of history. Indeed, freedom and boldness seem to be the two principal characteristics of sir Joshua's pictures. Horace, when he compares poetry and painting, says of the latter, that some please more on standing near, and others on keeping a longer distance,

. . . Erit, quæ, si proprius stes,

Te capiet magis ; et quædam, si longius abstes.

The latter ought to be said of sir Joshua. As to his colouring, much has been advanced against it, and as it is so little durable, a person might be inclined to think, that the painter did not care whether his paintings came down to posterity or not. However, the engraving of his works, will, in prints, preserve the merit of them.

Mr. West's colouring is very superior to that of the president, and he is, undoubtedly, the ablest historical painter at present in England, though by birth an American. It is this branch of painting to which his genius seems wholly to lead him ; and it is much to his credit that he has laid aside portrait-painting, to follow the bent of his talents, and that he sacrifices to history only, when the  
for-

former, perhaps, would be more conducive to his interest.

Mr. Gainsborough \* is justly esteemed an excellent landscape painter, and as one whose portraits bear the strongest likenesses. I am inclined to think, that some of his paintings will be much sought after, and, perhaps, in time, fetch, in proportion, a higher price, when they pass down to posterity, than any of his contemporaries.

Mr. Barry, the professor of painting to the Royal Academy, is a painter of decided merit. It was he who executed in so masterly a style, that series of pictures in the great room of the society of arts which I before mentioned. His residence in Italy has been of great advantage to him, in regard to his profession, and he has made himself known as an ingenious writer, relative to the state of the arts in England †.

I could add to these few, many more respectable names of painters, now living on this island, who are well and deservedly known in their profession ; but it is not my intention to give a list of them. Besides, as formerly Tillemans,

\* Since dead.

† An Enquiry into the real and imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England. London 1775, 8vo.

Monami, Watteau, Arland, Dahl, Zincke, and many others, who excelled in the art of painting in England, were foreigners, so it is the same at present. Zoffani, Louthembourg, Rigaud, Cipriani, Angelica Kauffman<sup>4</sup>, and many more, are foreigners, who, therefore, cannot come under the description of English artists. Neither do I intend to insert here a catalogue of the principal works of the present English painters. Their number is not great; and Mr. Green, in his Letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds, which I have before quoted, says, “ It is with no pleasure that I enter into a recapitulation of the labours of the English school, as they are known to be so few; it is the less pleasant, when I am not impowered to hold them all forth as instances of national patronage.” He likewise complains bitterly, that the Houghton collection of pictures was left to be bought by the empress of Russia for forty-two thousand pounds; and he asserts, “ that the omission of seizing the opportunity of buying the whole of that capital collection, and depositing them in the principal apartments of the new buildings in Somerset-place, was losing the only oppor-

<sup>4</sup> She has left England since.

<sup>5</sup> Page 46.

tunity which England ever had of forming a school of the art that could yield the consequence, and the uses such an establishment ought to possess, whereby its students might be benefited, and the institution become truly respectable." Indeed, if this was the only opportunity which could ever occur, it is much to be lamented, that it was lost either by neglect or by oversight.

The limits which I have prescribed to myself in composing this work, prevent me from being circumstantial in relating the state of the various branches of painting. Miniature is still in good repute, and many pretty pictures of this kind, are to be seen in the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy. Zincke from Dresden, who distinguished himself so much in enamel painting in England, and who died in 1767, is said not hitherto to have been extolled. Mr. Hurter, who is certainly very great in this branch of painting, and outdoes Zincke by far in the size of his enamel pictures, came over to England not many years ago; but, I am sorry to say, he did not meet with that encouragement he expected, and to which he thought himself intitled.

As the English are very fond of painted windows

dows, so they have of late years bestowed much pains on this kind of painting. I have before mentioned, in speaking of the English universities, that some colleges have been lately ornamented with this sort of painting, executed in a new stile, which is by some highly admired; while others have thought the taste for this kind of painting rather whimsical, and neither so beautiful, nor so striking, as it is thought to be by its admirers.

Drawing and painting in water-colours are very common in England. Many persons do it for their amusement, others procure themselves a subsistence by it. There are numbers of drawing masters in London, who either give lessons, or keep schools for instruction, where young people may be taught, at a very moderate expence.

Whether a late invention, by which pictures are said to be copied in oil colours, by a chemical and mechanical process, be really such, and of that importance which is given out, it is impossible for me to decide, since the method by which the copying is performed, is kept a great mystery. It seems not hitherto to have met with that success, and that encouragement, which it would deserve, if the invention were



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really such, as it is said to be by those who are in the secret.

There have been many instances in England, wherein painters, either on account of their real, or pretended merit, have been raised to the honour of knighthood,

ENGRAVING.



## E N G R A V I N G.

**T**HIS art is so nearly related to that of painting, that I cannot help mentioning it here in immediate connexion with it. It is that which multiplies the works of painters, makes them more common, and gives them a kind of immortality. It is to be regretted, that this art, of which the Germans justly claim the first invention, was not discovered till about the middle of the fifteenth century; or else, how many representations of master pieces of antiquity, by celebrated painters, statuaries, and architects, which were single originals, and now long ago destroyed by all-devouring time, might have gone down to the latest posterity! The English were formerly very much behind in this art; but they have in later years greatly raised their reputation in it, though it must be owned that the principal artists are foreigners, or of foreign extraction. To prove this, I need only mention the names of Bartolozzi, Ravenet, Grignion, and others. The English, however, have many of their own, who do honour to this

P 2

art,

art, and to their own names. I could give a catalogue of no inconsiderable length, if it were consistent with the limits which I have prescribed to myself in this work. Ryland, who by applying his ingenuity and his art to criminal purposes made his exit at Tyburn, was certainly very eminent in his profession. A Strange, a Sherwin, a Collier, a Heath, a Taylor, are undoubtedly engravers of merit, as are some others. The English have likewise excelled in what is called *mezzotinto*, united with etchings; but, as it is said, formerly more so than at present.

French prints have been thought superior in execution to the English; but the period, perhaps, is not far distant, when they will be equal, if not even have the preference. The trade which is carried on with English prints is very considerable, and begins, as I have already mentioned in another place<sup>6</sup>, to make a branch of commerce of no small importance. That the number of those who earn a subsistence by being employed in the art of engraving, consists not of a few, may easily be guessed from the number of prints and engravings which appear, either singly, or added to books and new publications. Authors, who wish to illustrate and to adorn their works with maps or engravings;

<sup>6</sup> Vol. i. p. 191.

bookfellers, who want to promote the sale of their new publications by copper plates; publishers of monthly magazines, together with the maps and printfelleets, procure many an engraver a livelihood. Though capital engravers receive high prices for their labours; yet, the greater part in the profession are paid but very moderately; and it appears to me sometimes inexplicable, how some books and magazines, embellished with copper-plates, can be sold at so small a price as they really are. Some prints which are now and then to be met with in them, are, indeed, elegantly executed, and do honour to the artists from whose hands they came; others are abominable.

Among the many countries, which lay out considerable sums in buying English prints, Germany is not the last. I know, from very good intelligence, that quantities of them are sent from hence, and that some of our rich *dilettanti* will pay oftentimes for an English print, three times the money which it costs in London, when they are told that it is scarce, or one of the first impressions; though, perhaps, the one is as improbable as the other. Caricature prints go likewise in great quantities over to Germany, and from thence to the adjacent countries. This is the more singular and ridiculous, as very few of those who pay dearly for them, know

any thing of the characters and transactions which occasioned such caricatures. They laugh at them, and become merry, though they are entirely unacquainted with the persons, the manners, and the customs which are ridiculed. The wit and the satire of such prints, being generally both local, are entirely lost upon them.

A foreigner will frequently meet in England with collections of fine prints, elegantly framed to ornament rooms; and, though this may be reckoned among the luxuries of life, yet I think a well-wisher to the arts will not be very rigorous in judging of such an expence, even when he views it in a moral light<sup>7</sup>. It is true, this noble art of engraving, is, in many respects, much abused for very immoral representations; and prints of this kind are in abundance. The art of painting has been always liable to the same reproaches; but as prints from copper-plates are easily multiplied, and spread rapidly, they may of course do more mischief; for, comparatively speaking, paintings of that sort come only un-

<sup>7</sup> One collection of capital prints and paintings, in London, is, at present, that of alderman Boydell, which is well worth seeing. The access to it is not very difficult, as the owner is an obliging and worthy gentleman, who is pleased when strangers and foreigners come to view it.

der the eye of a few. Besides as I have observed in another place, the police, in London, is so neglectful, that it suffers prints to be publicly exposed at the windows of printshops, which may put modesty to a blush, and virtue out of countenance. But it is with engraving, as it is with the liberty of the press. The abuses in both are great, but the advantages far greater. Many excellent paintings are by means of this art preserved from being lost or destroyed by time, by fire or by any other accident; many portraits of eminent men are transmitted down to a late posterity; many views of distant towns, of prospects in remote countries, of scenes in life, of memorable events, are brought before the eye of a spectator, without his being at the expence and the trouble of travelling; much knowledge is communicated to the lovers of science, of arts, of antiquity, of curiosities, of travelling, by means of prints, of maps, of engraved drawings, by which books are embellished and made useful. Indeed, the ancients would be astonished, if they could be made acquainted with our modern improvements in regard to arts and sciences; they would become envious on account of the many advantages which we have over them. I often cannot help thinking, how an ancient sage would stare, if

as it begins to be of consequence to En-  
commerce and fame for arts, I wonder that  
artificers who excel in it, are excluded from be-  
members of the Royal Academy. I can  
discover any reason for an exclusion, except  
painters compare themselves to original authors  
and regard the engravers only as their printers.  
But I own, that a good engraver, in my  
opinion, is far superior to a middling painter.  
If engravers of real merit were received as a  
class of artificers in the Royal Academy, there is  
doubt but that it would excite emulation  
to the benefit of the art.

It deserves mentioning that the English  
have secured, by act of parliament, to the  
engraver, the works of his skill and industry  
in the same manner as they have secured to an author  
the profits of his pen and his labours.  
For this reason the words *published as the act d*

great sagacity and pretended knowledge, I have seen these words frequently translated, as if their meaning was, that such prints were published by the express order of parliament, and therefore had an additional value.

The engraving of seals, and of other works in steel and in precious stones, has been carried from time to time to a greater degree of perfection. Christian Reisen, a Norwegian by birth, raised the art of engraving seals very much in England. As to medals, the English have produced no great artists in this branch of engraving, and whatever of this kind is of note has been done by foreigners. Daffier was a native of Geneva, and Tanner, together with Natter, were both Germans. They resided for some time in England, but meeting with no encouragement, they went abroad again, where they died.

SCULP.



## S C U L P T U R E.

**B**EFORE Ryfbrack a Fleming, and Roubillac a Frenchman, raised this art in England to some dignity, it was but little regarded. Le Blanc, who in his Letters frequently assumes the air of a great connoisseur, though it is said that he in fact was none, speaks of Ryfbrack in a very contemptuous manner\*. Of Cibber, whom I have already mentioned in another place, he says, that he does not deserve to be ranked among the most ordinary sculptors, though the English took him to be a second Praxiteles. Ryfbrack, among many other works, executed Newton's monument in Westminster-abbey, which, as I have mentioned in another place, was erected neither by the desire, nor at the expence of the public, but by Mr. Conduit, who married Newton's niece. Before Ryfbrack got into repute, he was employed by Gibbs the architect, who, as Mr.

\* Vol. i. let. xxiii.

Walpole relates, paid to the Flemish artist, only five and thirty guineas for works that he had finished, out of an hundred which he had taken himself. Ryfbrack, however, soon got rid of this kind of oppression, and acquired by his works great fame and emolument. Roubillac, who left so many fine pieces of statuary behind him, and Scheemacker, who executed Shakespeare's monument in Westminster-abbey, were his contemporaries and his rivals.

This abbey is still the principal theatre of sculpture in England, and it was Ryfbrack who introduced there a better taste, than that which had prevailed before. Busts and bas-reliefs became the fashion, which latter have received an addition from scenical representations. These, if the monuments are low, suffer much by the hands of the populace and children. Thus many a genius on Newton's monument has lost a limb, or is else disfigured; and the monument for major André, who was executed as a spy by the Americans, had been opened only a few months to public view, when one of the principal figures had already lost its head, and the work was otherwise damaged. In the abbey, room for monuments begins to be wanting, whilst the walls of St. Paul's ca-

thedral remain bare ; for, as I have observed in another place, many are interred here, and monuments erected to preserve their memory, who never had any just claim to such an honour. A grave in any church-yard, and a common tomb-stone might have been quite sufficient for them, without crowding the tombs and the walls of the abbey, so as to puzzle the grave-diggers, in finding room without disturbing the ashes of others, and to force the sculptor to confine his art in a dark corner, or within a small space of the wall, or on the side of a window.

There are sculptors and statuaries enough in England, and particularly in London ; but their merits, in respect to their art, are generally not very great, though a person that perambulates London, may, perhaps, meet with a yard in which the sculptor has displayed his works, and where the passenger is entertained by a collection of gods, men, and beasts, to whom the art, such as it is, has given an inanimate existence. Carlini, by birth an Italian, who worked some time for the late king of Prussia at Sans Souci, but has resided above twenty years in England, Nollekens, Wilton, Bacon, and Moore, are, perhaps, at present,

present, the principal artists who do credit to the art of sculpture in England.

I may place under this article the works of that art which goes under the technical name of *Plastick*. In this respect, the skill of the English, in founding statues and figures from any kind of metal, is said not yet to have arrived at any great perfection; but their works of ornament, in what is called *papier maché*, and those carved in wood, are in general exceedingly good. The earthen ware, the compositions, and the imitations of works of antiquity, of a Wedgwood and Bentley, exceed every thing in its kind; they are well known abroad, and admired by the curious. A well drawn up catalogue, of cameos, intaglios, medals, and bas-reliefs, with a general account of vases and other ornaments, after the antique, made by Wedgwood and Bentley, and sold at their warehouse in London, has been published many years ago; and I cannot but advise a curious and inquisitive stranger, or foreigner, not to neglect going to see these elegant productions of a manufactory, which, hitherto, in its kind, has not its equal. The collection of cameos and intaglios made and sold by Tassie, in Leicester-fields, deserves likewise the attention of a lover of the arts.

His

His impressions, which are said to amount to nearly fourteen thousand, are made, from the originals, in so neat a stile, that the very glass composition in which they are taken, is stained in such a manner, that it resembles the colour of the originals.

ARCHI-

## A R C H I T E C T U R E.

**I**NIGO Jones, and after him fir Christopher Wren, have corrected the taste of the English in regard to architecture. They endeavoured to introduce the chaste and good taste of the Greeks of old, from whom it came into Italy and some other countries ; but they found that this was a difficult undertaking. Sir Christopher experienced many disagreeable things, which originated in a propensity to a bad taste in architecture, then prevailing among his countrymen. Of Vanburgh, who after fir Christopher excited most attention, it is said, he built without taste, and that his erections are very heavy. For this reason a wit made that well known monumental inscription for him, in which he calls on the earth to lie heavy on him \*. It seems, however, as if justice were not done altogether to Vanburgh's talents. James Gibbs was a celebrated architect among the English ; but it is said of him likewise, that most of his erections are tasteless, and have nothing either attractive or

\* Lie heavy on him earth ! for he,  
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

pleas-

pleasing. The Radcliffe-library at Oxford, and St. Martin's church at Westminster, are among his works. The two earls of Pembroke and Burlington patronized the arts in general, and architecture in particular. About thirty or forty years ago, a kind of rage for Chinese architecture broke out, which was frequently joined to a Gothic taste. Luckily, this folly, together with that of furnishing houses in the Chinese way, has subsided.

There are here and there many good modern buildings to be met with in London; but they are too often hid between other houses, or in a place where they do not present themselves to the eye to any advantage. The Adelphi buildings, in Durham-yard, were erected not many years ago, and cried up as the finest monuments of modern architecture; but the tone has since been much lowered.

The principal architects in England, at present, are reckoned to be sir William Chambers, Wyat, Stuart, Payne, Sandby, Dawkins, and the two Adams. Westminster-Bridge is one of the finest pieces of architecture in its kind; but, as I have observed already in another place, it is the work of L'abey, a Swiss, who died in the year 1762, at Paris.

Many

Many foreigners, on visiting this island, have found fault with the English taste in architecture, and, perhaps, not always without reason; but there are certainly many public as well as private buildings, which always deserve the admiration and the esteem of any one who is unprejudiced, and who knows something of the architectural art. Though, perhaps, the mansion of the lord-mayor is a building which does no great credit to its architect, yet there are close by, the Royal-Exchange, and still nearer, St. Stephen's church, which cannot but give satisfaction even to a connoisseur. St. Paul's cathedral, notwithstanding it is said to be an imitation of St. Peter's at Rome, upon a smaller scale, in which the proportion is neglected, will, nevertheless, always be esteemed a noble piece of architecture. It were to be wished only, that the avenues were constructed in conformity to the plan proposed by sir Christopher Wren, for the rebuilding of London, after the great fire.

Among the fine country-seats of the nobility and the wealthy, which are scattered over the whole kingdom, many are to be met with, which shew a good taste, and are very convenient and splendid. There are, besides the



Vitruvius Britannicus, many modern books with neat engravings, on which the principal country-seats, and other buildings, which are worth seeing in England, are represented. Such country-seats are generally furnished in a splendid and costly style; they are kept not only within, but even in their avenues, extremely neat and clean. Some French authors have preferred, in their writings, the *châteaux* and villas of their country to those in England; but I confess, that I am of a contrary opinion. As to the neatness, cleanliness, and elegance of such rural seats, no one who has seen both those in England and in France, will hesitate to give the preference to the former. The parks, the gardens, the lawns which adorn them, and which so carefully, and I may say expensively, are kept in order, give them even at first sight, a superiority and preference to those in France. It is but a few years since I traversed, during the summer months, France from Calais as far as Lyons, and from thence into Switzerland. I then had an opportunity of seeing many of their *châteaux* and villas, both within-side and without; but, unprejudiced as I am, I confess that those which I saw in France were not comparable to those of the same kind

in England. I could draw, in this respect, many comparisons, if the limits which I have prescribed to myself would admit of it.

The modern way of building dwelling-houses in England for the middling class of people, differs very much from that which prevailed fifty years ago. The present is by no means very durable; but more neat and convenient than formerly. There is much uniformity in the plans, upon which the generality of houses at present are constructed. The materials, which are used for building, particularly the bricks, are commonly very indifferent; but the houses are only erected for a certain number of years, which they commonly last, and perhaps, a good while longer. Most of the modern country-seats and villas are magnificent and splendid erections, which indicate pomp and luxury; but many of them, it is said, do not contain that old English hospitality and simplicity of manners, which are reported in former times to have been so conspicuous in England. The old mansion-houses in the country, if they are not pulled down and new ones erected in their place, are now let out for boarding-schools, or for other purposes. There is something venerable in these old country-seats; and when I have had opportunities of seeing, or of being

in them, a series of pleasing reflexions has presented itself to the mind. Indeed, many of them will lead to contemplations similar to those which occurred to Seneca, when he wrote his eighty-sixth epistle to Lucilius, at Liternum, on the spot where Scipio Africanus the Elder concluded his days. The reflexions contained in that letter are very applicable to our modern times; and though the Sybarites of the age may think the epistle rather an insipid one, yet it contains much sound reasoning, and shews, that the turns which manners, fashions, and luxury take, are in all ages, in regard to beginning, progress, and exit, the same. The contrast between the country mansion of Scipio, and those in Seneca's time, only two hundred and thirty years after, was striking; but of Scipio's humble farm, and of the proud and costly villas which, a few centuries afterwards, abounded in Campania and the neighbourhood of Liternum, hardly any vestiges are now to be found. On comparing the old mansions in England, with the splendid country-seats of modern times, it requires, by reasoning from analogy, no spirit of prophecy to say, what will be, in the end, the fate of luxury and ostentatious pride.

GAR-

## G A R D E N I N G.

THE present taste of the English in gardening is original, and entirely their own. It is said, that among the Chinese, long ago, their gardens have been laid out in a somewhat similar, but very wild taste. So much has been written upon English gardening, that it would be very superfluous if I were to give here a circumstantial account of it. Mr. Horace Walpole, at the end of the fourth volume of his *Anecdotes of Painting*, to which I have already referred more than once, has given an entertaining history of this modern gardening, and of William Kent its inventor. Mr. Mason has written an excellent poem; intitled, *The English Garden*; and I must refer the reader, who wishes to be more instructed on this subject, to these two authors; and, indeed, there are many others whom he may consult <sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, Mr. Whatley, in his *Observations on modern Gardening, illustrated by Descriptions*. London, 1770. 8vo.

Kent wanted to make the garden a representation of a landscape, where, in a small compass, a number of objects should present themselves to the eye, without being anxiously connected according to rules of order. It was to be a miniature picture of nature, as it is seen on the surface of the earth. His garden was to be somewhat in the taste of Faustus, the friend of Martial, of whom the poet says :

. . . . . Rure vero barbaroque letatur.

The great principles upon which Mr. Kent went to work, were perspective, and light and shade. Besides, he was of opinion, that nature is averse to a strait line ; which, however, is subject to many limitations and exceptions. According to this supposition, therefore, fountains which spout water, compressed by art, in strait lines, and cascades that make it fall perpendicularly, were to be banished from a garden. Little streams or small rivulets, which gently flow in meandering windings, through the unadorned lawn, were adopted, where it could be done, in their place. Over these rivulets considerable bridges are built ; and as the roads in England are not strait, as those in France, but turn so often, that a person is to walk two miles from one place to another, which in a strait line are only one mile distant from each other, no strait walks

walks are to be suffered in a garden, which is to be a representation of the surface of the country. Notwithstanding the strict adherence to a true representation of the country, Chinese, Greek, and Roman temples in the neighbourhood of a Gothic church; a witch-house not far from St. Augustine's cave, besides other foreign curiosities, may be seen in English gardens, to represent to those who perambulate them, and will believe it, that this is a scene of an English landscape in miniature. But to speak seriously, the English gardens, in which even the parks may be classed, are very pleasing, and have many charms. The fine gravelled winding walks, which are kept in the best order, may serve for short promenades in all seasons. On one side of them frequently trees, shrubs, and fragrant flowers are planted, when on the other, an even lawn, or a smooth grass-plat, delights the eye. A variety of foreign trees, shrubs, plants, and flowers, which the English have collected from all quarters of the globe, and brought to their island, contribute greatly to the beauty of their gardens. They have with much care selected and propagated those which agree with the English climate, and can bear the open air through the

year ; others they keep in green-houses during the severer season.

In planning and cultivating their gardens, they endeavour to assist nature, and to display its beauties, if there be any, to greater advantage. Those spots, where none are to be found, they endeavour to hide, or place them in the shade. In some I have observed, that fine prospects were aimed at, so as to surprize the wanderer with them.

Whoever wishes to acquire an idea of the beauties of English gardens, ought to see the Leasowes, Persfield, Hagley, Painshill, and Stowe ; and, in the neighbourhood of London, Kew, and lord Tilney's seat on Epping-Forest. On account of fine prospects, Richmond, and what is called Wooburn-Farm near Chertsey, are worth seeing.

We have endeavoured in some parts of Germany to imitate English gardens ; but they will never come to the perfection of those in England ; for we want the English gravel to render the walks firm and agreeable ; and we want the English climate, which, on account of its moisture, keeps the gardens, and the fields, almost the whole year round, in a constant verdure.

MUSIC.

## M U S I C.

**I** SHALL certainly not enter into a critical disquisition of the taste of the English with regard to music. Dr. Burney has given a history of this art, and has treated the subject in a very ample and satisfactory manner. Those, therefore, who wish to be informed of the state of music in different ages, in different countries, and particularly in England, must be referred to his work.

To me it is perfectly indifferent, how the questions are decided, Whether the English have a national taste in music, or not? Whether, if they have any, they owe it to our countryman Handel? Whether the music of the English be a dialect of the Germans, or of the Italians? It is sufficient for me to say, that the Britons love music, and the North-Britons more than their Southern neighbours. The Scotch, indeed, are unable to pay for their entertainment large sums of money to German and Italian musicians, like the English; but they have a kind of national music of their  
own



own which is not disagreeable, and their airs and songs are often lively and melodious.

It seems at present to be a part of female education, to have the girls instructed in music, if the parents think they can afford it. Few, however, acquire sufficient skill to play well; and the little which they have learnt, they generally forget again, as soon as they are provided with husbands. For too many seem to be of opinion, that marriage is the chief end of education, and that this being obtained they need not trouble themselves with the acquisition of new accomplishments, or even with retaining those which they might, in some degree, have acquired. Some exceptions, indeed, are to be made to this assertion; but they are not very numerous.

A lover of music may be entertained in London with many public and private concerts. Those at Vauxhall and Ranelagh I have already mentioned. Musical societies are likewise formed, such as the *Anacreontic*, the *Society of Ancient Music*, the *Catch-Club*, &c. Some *dilettanti* have established clubs, where they regularly meet on fixed evenings, to amuse themselves with instrumental music, or with singing, naturally accompanied with drinking. When feasts, or great dinners are given in taverns,

verns, some of the company entertain, after dinner, the rest with songs, or even public fingers are occasionally invited for such a purpose. Sometimes in private companies, even of the better sort, after supper, a song, perhaps, will be sung by a gentleman or a lady, in a very entertaining manner, though it will happen that voices obtrude themselves, which produce symptoms of ear-ach. The streets of London, not altogether for the honour of the police, abound in ballad-fingers of both sexes. Many ill-looking fellows, and many tattered syrens, sing their silly songs, and soon gather a croud around them, which contains very dexterous hands, that search the pockets of those who are enchanted by the charms of the song, or of the female fingers.

The church-music of the English is but indifferent, when compared to that in many parts of the continent. The Dissenters have not even so much as organs, and they often sing their psalms not in very pleasing melodies. In episcopal churches organs are generally to be found; though many in the country, nay, even some churches in London, are without them. Sometimes a set of people, a little instructed in singing, make up the want of an organ on Sundays. The chanting in cathedrals, in some college-

college-chapels in the two universities, and in a few others, where choristers are trained and kept for that purpose, is not equal to what I have heard of the kind on the continent : it is too monotonous, and soon becomes tiresome. However, that grand church or sacred music, which, for several years past, has been performed in the beginning of the summer, in Westminster-abbey, has, perhaps, never had its superior in any country. In St. Paul's cathedral, and in the Foundling-hospital, for the sake of promoting charitable donations, great musical performances take place annually, which consist mostly of some compositions of Handel ; and as the admittance is paid for, the sums collected are considerable. During the time of Lent, sacred oratorios are performed more than once a week, on the two London theatres, to numerous audiences, where a friend to good music, and who even can judge of it, will not repent his attendance.

Though it is thought by foreigners, that the English language is not the best adapted to singing and melody, yet English operas are composed and represented on the stage, and some not without success, such as *Artaxerxes*, *Love in a Village*, and the *Duenna*. But none of them is oftener brought out than the *Beggar's Opera*, :

*Opera*, which was originally written with an intent to ridicule all operas. The good reception it always meets with, is not owing to the music to which it is set, but to the scenes it represents, which are particularly adapted to the taste of the generality of that sort of audience which then attends the theatre, and relishes, in a high degree, such kind of representations. Upon the whole, it may be said, that as the English, to their credit, prefer nature and truth to improbability and bombast, the operas, which, by some of their best writers, particularly by Addison, are so justly ridiculed, have not met with great encouragement. There is, indeed, an Italian opera supported in London, at a very great expence, by subscription; but as it is the only one in Great Britain and Ireland, so it is certain, that by far the greatest number of subscribers lavish their money because it is the fashion, and not because it is their taste, or contributes much to their pleasure and entertainment. Many foreign singers, fiddlers, and dancers, are extravagantly paid; and, if they are the least frugal, they are enabled to retire to their own country, where they may live in affluence, enriched by English money. As I am convinced, that the greatest number of those who constitute the audience at the opera, do  
6 either

either not at all understand the Italian language, or at least very imperfectly; it is easily to be conceived, that they pay very dear for being tired, and very little entertained. Lord Chesterfield, though he understood Italian, says, nevertheless, "Whenever I go to an opera, I leave my sense and reason at the door with my half guinea, and deliver myself up to my eyes and my ears".

Those who are musicians by profession, and who earn part of their livelihood by teaching, have seen formerly, as it is said, better times than at present. I have heard of some receiving a guinea, or half a guinea for a lesson, who now, perhaps, must be content with five shillings. Nay, those that had acquired a kind of celebrity, kept their carriages to wait on their scholars, as is the case, in these days, with some hair-dressers, who are in high vogue. Musicians of note are frequently called to private concerts of the rich, where they receive four or more guineas for a few hours playing; I, however, have reason to think, that this kind of liberality is at present somewhat lessened. The most eminent in their profession, as musicians or singers, have besides a custom to give concerts at Free-mason's hall, or at the

<sup>1</sup> Letters to his Son. Vol. iii. Lett. 237. p. 257.

Rooms in Hanover-square, or in the Little Theatre in the Hay-market, or in some other place, where the admission tickets are half a guinea each. The emoluments arising from such performances are their own. These kinds of charitable contributions, under which the public is laid, are called benefits, and produce sometimes pretty handsome sums of money to those who partake of them. They amount, deducting all the expences, perhaps, to an hundred and more guineas. It might be supposed that, in England, people in a musical line, if they are eminent in their profession, have an opportunity of acquiring some fortune, or at least a sufficient income to live upon; but the case is generally the reverse. Several of the principal German and Italian musicians in London, I have known to live in a most deranged state of their finances; they were involved in debt, and died wretchedly poor. It is very probable, that an inconsiderate and extravagant manner of living, was the cause which produced this effect. A fund for decayed musicians has been instituted, which I presume to be considerable, as among other sources for its increase, no small share of those great sums which have been raised by the grand music

in Westminster-abbey, has been appropriated to it.

England has, within the latter half of this century, produced some eminent men in regard to musical compositions; but far the greater part of those excellent musical works, which, within this space of time, have appeared in London, were composed by foreigners, Germans and Italians. It is almost incredible what a number of new musical pieces, from time to time, make their appearance, and are exposed for sale in music-shops. They are bought eagerly at first, but soon get out of fashion, to make room for those that follow next. Those who compose such music find it very profitable, if their compositions meet with success. Not a great many sheets of new music are bought for half a guinea, and the composer is frequently very well paid for his copy. The property of such kind of composition is secured to the owner by law, in the same manner as literary property, or as the copper-plate to its engraver.

England is famous for fine musical instruments, and the best of them in regard to harpichords, piano fortes, guitars, and organs, are made by Germans. The reasons why they  
execute

execute work here in a much superior manner to what they do in their own country, are, partly, because being better paid than any where else, they can bestow more time and more pains upon what they have in hand ; partly, because they work with the best tools, and on the best materials.



## T H E S T A G E.

SO much has been written on the British theatre, in England as well as abroad, that it can by no means be difficult to satisfy the curiosity of those who wish to be more fully informed. I, therefore, shall confine myself to a short account of its present state, into which I intend to insert here and there a remark, as occasion shall offer. The best and latest accounts of the London theatres are to be met with in Colley Cibber's *Apology*; in Davies's *Life of Garrick*, and his *Dramatic Miscellanies*; in Victor's *History of the Theatres of London and Dublin*, which goes as far as the year 1770; in Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*; in Egerton's *Theatrical Remembrancer*, containing a complete list of all the dramatic performances in the English language, which reaches as far as 1788. Doddsley's *Theatrical Records*, or an account of English dramatic authors and their works, were published in 1756.

As

As the propensity of the English for dramatic performances is so great, it is rather to be wondered at, that there are so few theatres in London. Properly speaking, there are but two, that in Drury-lane and that in Covent-garden; for the Little Theatre in the Hay-market is only open during the summer season, when the other two are shut. In the year 1786, a new theatre was built near Wellclose-square; but so many impediments have been laid in its way, that hitherto the proprietors have not been able to obtain permission to act regular plays. The reasons which have prevented it are very well known in London. In Shakespeare's time, no less than six theatres existed in the city, and in each of them plays were performed. Dryden says, that the English dramatical productions of that time are the best, particularly in regard to language. There are theatres at Bath, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Margate, Wakefield, Edinburgh, and in some other places in Great Britain, but they do not come up to those in London; and many of them are only open during the summer season, when they can get some London actors and actresses. The theatrical season of Covent-garden and Drury-lane, is from the middle of September to the beginning of June; and

those months that are between belong to the Little Theatre in the Hay-market, which the late Mr. Foote brought into repute.

The London theatres have nothing attractive on their outside; but within they are very neat; nay, I may say splendid and convenient. Besides the pit and the boxes, there are only two galleries; in Paris I have found five or six. The entrance-price into the theatres, considering the dearness of every thing in London, seems to be pretty moderate; and there is even, in Drury-lane, and Covent-Garden, after the three first acts of the play are over, admittance for half price, except when a new pantomime is represented, on which occasion nothing less than the full price is taken. The playhouses are generally much crowded, when any thing of note is acted; and it will sometimes happen, that they fill so fast on their being opened, that numbers cannot be admitted, which seems to be a plain proof that more playhouses are wanted, particularly as these two which now exist, are situated in one part of London only, and close to one another. Before the doors are opened, there is generally for an hour and longer such a crowd, and such a mobbing, that many a one, who, perhaps is inclined to see a play performed, stays away, because he does not like to be jostled about for  
such

such a length of time, among a multitude, where the least politeness is entirely out of the question, and where pick-pockets of all sorts are extremely busy. The house in Covent-garden is said to hold, when it is full, about fifteen hundred people; and that in Drury-lane about thirteen hundred, because it is somewhat smaller. The income of an evening, when there is a full audience, is reckoned to amount to about three hundred and twenty pounds. Supposing, therefore, that, during eight months in a year, six and twenty plays are performed every month, and the income of every evening amounts, on an average, in each theatre, to three hundred pounds, it will make the revenue of both houses, during eight months, 124,800 pounds. If I reckon the income of the Little Theatre in the Haymarket at 20,000 pounds, it makes the whole 144,800 pounds sterling. This is, according to our money in Germany, nearly a million of dollars, which the London public contributes annually with pleasure and eagerness, for the support of only three theatres!

The English, particularly the inhabitants of London, taking so much pleasure in theatrical representations, it is no wonder, that the principal actors and actresses find their situations

very comfortable; that they are esteemed, and live in a very decent style. I know that some of the latter have been paid, during the season, between twenty and thirty pounds per week; out of which, however, they are to defray the expences of dress. Some of the actors have from ten to twenty pounds per week. Besides, they have generally, in every theatrical season, a benefit night, which to some, who are eminent in their profession, is worth between two and three hundred pounds. I need not mention that the character of a player has nothing degrading in England, and that those who are at the head of the profession, are rather courted, even by people of rank, and introduced into the best companies. In France, they have hitherto denied an actor, or an actress, who called a Christian burial; in England, players are interred with magnificence in Westminster abbey, on the side of kings, when it is for.

Since good actors are so well paid in England, it is no wonder, that, at present, dramatists, whose works meet with applause likewise earn, in a very ample manner, the fruits of their labour. It is true, that for his much admired tragedy, *Venice* could hardly find a purchaser, till

bookfeller Tonson gave him fifteen pounds for it; but the times are greatly altered. The author of a play, which meets with tolerable success, may promise himself between four and five hundred pounds, if it is acted a dozen times running. The profits of the third, the sixth, and the ninth night belong to him<sup>2</sup>. When during the winter of 1786, the comedy *Such Things Are*, was produced on the stage, the authoress, Mrs. Inchbald, who wrote it, received for the first benefit night, if the account then stated in the newspapers be true, an hundred and sixty pounds; on the second an hundred and ninety; and on the third, an hundred and fifty-five. The copy of the play, as it was likewise mentioned in the public prints, she sold for two hundred pounds. Thus a work of only a few sheets produced to the writer no less than seven hundred and five pounds. If such be the reward, it is surely well worth while to write a play.

Though the theatre in Drury-lane bears the name of a *Royal Theatre*; yet, it does not differ, in regard to its constitution and its support, from the rest. It is not the king who supports

<sup>2</sup> Formerly a dramatic writer had but one benefit. The first that had two nights was *Southern*, and the first that had three was *Rowe*. JOHNSON'S *Lives*, &c. vol. ii. p. 74.

it, but the whole public, whose contributions are far more considerable than the expences, which kings and princes are accustomed to bestow on the support of their theatres.

Many traits of the national character of a people may be observed, in their public entertainments; and it appears to me, as if the English intended to shew that liberty, which they are used to glory in, no where more than in their playhouses. Persons of high rank, and others of the very lowest, are present; and it seems as if the latter were determined to intimate that they were as good as the former. The upper-gallery, which is occupied by the low part of the audience, will oftentimes govern the whole house, and the players are under a necessity to accommodate themselves to their whim, and to humour them. It has afforded me now and then pleasure, when I have observed, that the gods, as the company in the upper gallery are called, have been among the first whose sensations have discovered some of the good things of a new play, and welcomed them with noisy applause. A good thought, or a satirical expression, aimed at modify follies and vices, has, perhaps, hardly escaped the lips of an actor, before the gods have in a moment signified their pleasure by a roar of ap=  
 6 probation=

probation, and the noise of their hands and feet. Nay, the composers of new dramas, and the players themselves, will lay snares to catch the applause of the upper gallery, in order to balance the judgment of the critics below, in the pit. They call this, in the technical language of the theatre, clap-traps; but it is oftentimes mere chaff that the populace suffer themselves to be caught with.

It is said on the continent, that the English are more fond of tragedies than comedies. This, perhaps, may have been true formerly, but not at present. They seem to be given in these modern times more to cheerfulness than melancholy and sadness; and it is certain, that more comedies are performed on the stage than tragedies, and that a far less number of the latter sort are written at present than formerly. Whether the reason of this is, because it is more difficult to court with success the tragic muse than the comic, I will not minutely investigate; but the latter appearing far oftener on the stage than the former, shews plainly, that the public are more fond of the comic than the tragic, and that, therefore, the managers, for the sake of profit, entertain the audience ofteneft with that of which they are sure that it will fill the house most. Besides, I be-  
lieve



lieve that there is no nation under the sun, which produces more original characters than the English, and that, therefore, a comic writer has an ample field before him to gather fruit, with which he may entertain a public that has a great propensity to satire.

Most of those who frequent the theatre, go there for the sake of pleasure and entertainment. The managers are, for this reason, obliged to call in for their aid splendid scenes, theatrical processions, pantomimes and harlequin, to draw a full house, and to increase their revenues. This was not only the taste in Shakespeare's time, but it has been always so with the greatest part of a playhouse audience, ever since theatrical representations took place among men. Shakespeare found himself, on account of the taste of his countrymen, under a necessity to interlard his tragedies with some scenes of drollery, and to enliven them with witches, with apparitions of ghosts, and spectres. A pedantic critic, who is less acquainted with the human heart than Shakespeare was, will, perhaps, look upon all these things as such of which the poet's tragedies stood not in need; but this was nevertheless the case. Many of the gentlemen and ladies in the boxes, elegantly dressed and outwardly adorned as they are, resemble,

ble, notwithstanding, their very homely friends in the upper-gallery, who are more taken and pleased with the outward shew of the representation than with the intrinsic value of a good play. For this very reason, among the tragedies of Shakespeare, Hamlet, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, are those which produce the fullest houses. From motives on the same principle, to please the eye and to fill the theatre, very expensive pantomimes are exhibited, the first representation of which, will cost, perhaps, several thousand pounds. The pleasure and the astonishment of the greatest part of the audience on such occasions is very great, when apparitions and transformations are exhibited on the stage, by the tricks of harlequin, or the wand of a pretended conqueror. The herbs of Pontus, which Virgil's Alpheusæus<sup>3</sup> praises for their power of changing men into wolves, and raising the ghosts of the deceased from their graves, could never produce such effects and raise such astonishment.

It has been frequently, and perhaps, not unjustly objected to English theatrical entertainments, that they last too long; and that the

<sup>3</sup> Hic ego sæpe lupum fieri, et se condere filvis

Mœrin, sæpe animas imis exire sepulchris

—vidi.

VIRG. Eclog. viii. v. 97.

spec-

spectators, at least those in the pit and in the galleries, are obliged to remain in their places above four hours together. It is, therefore, the more necessary to keep the stage, during that time, always busy, and that the dramatic writers should introduce as much variety in their plays, and multiply the situations in them, as much as possible. It is, indeed, very visible in the theatres in London, that the eyes and the thoughts of the generality of the spectators wander much about; that they begin to yawn, and forget the play. For this reason, good humotr is to be kept up between the acts, by means of songs, dances, processions, and things of that kind. I have observed, that this was necessary even in many of Shakespeare's plays, to prevent drowsiness among the audience; though perhaps a Garrick, a Woodward, or other principal actors, endeavoured to render them pleasing.

English plays, and the writers of them, have been frequently blamed for a great neglect of the three unities so strongly enjoined by Aristotle; and Shakespeare has been particularly censured on this account. But defenders have not been wanting, who have pleaded English liberty, and that their dramatic writers were not subject to the laws of the Stagirite. Indeed,

deed, it seems as if the unity of action was the first and the principal dramatic law, which a dramatic writer, in regard to the three unities, ought never to transgress; though he may, without much blame, deviate in some degree from the two others, in a manner not much to be perceived. I do not know, whether the violation of truth, upon which the law of the three unities is said to be founded, can be greater, or the confidence in the deception of the spectators of the play be more stretched beyond the proper bounds, than when the scenes are shifted so often; when sometimes a private room, sometimes a prison, sometimes a public place, and a variety of other sights, are brought before an audience, which does not change its place. It supposes a total want of critical observation among all the spectators, to think that not one of them, when he sees a play performed, in which the three unities are strictly observed, such, for instance, as Addison's Cato, should not find it pleasant to hear the old Romans, represented there, speaking in elegant English blank verse; or smile when he sees, as I have done more than once, the grave Cato before him, in a modern wig, and white silk stockings, or Porcia in an elegant cap, made  
up

up after the newest fashion. If we, without any complaint, can put up with these deviations from truth, if we do not desire a unity of language, of dress, and an hundred other unities, which historical truth might require, why should we, on seeing an excellent play of Shakespeare's, or of any other good dramatic writer, performed, be angry, because the three unities, prescribed by Aristotle, are not strictly adhered to. The English, who like to be unshackled, may certainly say many things against this censure of their plays, which have some resemblance to their modern taste of gardening.

Whether the English or the French theatre has the preference, is a question, which I am very far from deciding. I have seen some plays performed on the French stage at Paris and at Lyons; but as I should not attempt to judge even of the English stage, which I have often frequented, so should I much less venture to give my opinion of the French, of which I have seen but little. Lord Chesterfield, who is looked upon as a connoisseur in these things, may do that which I dare not. He gives the French theatre the preference before all the rest in the world, and consequently, before the English also. He expresses himself thus very  
empha-

emphatically, “ There is not, nor ever was,  
 “ any theatre comparable to the French ”. In  
 another place he says, “ I could wish there  
 “ were a treaty made between the French and  
 “ English theatres, in which both parties should  
 “ make considerable concessions. The English  
 “ ought to give up their notorious violations  
 “ of all unities ; and all their massacres, racks,  
 “ dead bodies, and mangled carcaffes, which  
 “ they so frequently exhibit upon their stage.  
 “ The French should engage to have more ac-  
 “ tion, and less declamation ; and not to cram  
 “ and crowd things together, to almost a degree  
 “ of impossibility, from a too scrupulous ad-  
 “ herence to the unities ’.”

The English stage has been blamed, particularly during the reign of Charles II. for being exceedingly licentious ; but it has been, in this respect, much reformed ; though there occur frequently such expressions and double entendres as may put modesty to the blush, which, however, seem not to be disliked by the majority even of female spectators, who either bestow a smile upon them, or hide their titter behind their fans. Lord Chesterfield ascribes the merit of this reform to the good example of the

\* CHESTERFIELD'S Letters, vol. iii. p. 71.

5 Ibid. p. 254.

French theatre; and Mr. Hume says, "The English are become sensible of the scandalous licentiousness of their stage from the example of French decency and morals<sup>6</sup>."

There are plenty of new plays, and sometimes very excellent ones, which appear from time to time; but, as I have before observed, comedies are more numerous than tragedies. French plays are frequently translated, and many who write for the stage take very liberally from French dramatic authors. In France, they sometimes take the same liberties with English plays; but, I believe, not near so frequently as is done in England. It appears to me rather remarkable, that the Scotch have none among their authors, who have shewn great talents for theatrical productions. Whether this be owing, as I have heard it asserted, to their more rigid education as Presbyterians, or to any other cause, I am unable to determine.

Riccoboni<sup>7</sup>, who bestows so much praise upon the English stage, says of the actors, that they are far superior to those of France and Italy. This may be true in national plays, or such as relate to English transactions and man-

<sup>6</sup> HUME's Essays, vol. i. p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Account of the Theatres in Europe, p. 176.

ners;

ners; but I doubt very much the truth of this assertion, when it is applied to the performing of plays where the scene is not in England, or when the play is translated from another language, particularly if it be a tragedy. It is very true, that the English have had many excellent actors and actresses; but the generality of them are but indifferent. Dr. Burney, when he saw a play performed at St. Omer's, even by a strolling company, does not hesitate to praise French actors at the expence of those of his own country. He says of them which he saw, "They seemed much more at their ease, and appeared more like the characters they were to represent, than those on the English stage, who, except a few of the principal actors, are generally so awkward and unnatural, as to destroy all illusion." I have seen instances in London, where players were raised in the opinion and estimation of the public, without much merit, merely because some, who pretended to be judges in these matters, though in fact they were not, cried them up as the most excellent in their profession. The multitude, as is generally the case, good naturedly, did not trouble themselves with inquiring into the truth of what they were told by these supposed judges, and players thus acquired a name,



who, without such kind of puffing, would have remained in that obscurity to which they were originally designed. It ought, however, to be said, in praise of English players of both sexes, that they commonly have learnt their part extremely well, and give very little trouble to the prompter. The declamation of some is excellent, of others middling, and of many very indifferent. Though the action of the generality is, as Dr. Burney describes it, in the passage which I have just quoted; yet there are likewise some who do perfect justice to the characters which they represent, and whose action is natural, easy, and well adapted. I never saw a greater master in this respect than Garrick was. No man, I believe, had the features of his countenance more at his command than he had, to adapt them to almost every situation of character; and nobody understood the language of the eyes and the mien better than him; he was completely master of the mimic art. I, therefore, have often wondered, why the English thought it an honour to call him the English Roscius. The Roman Roscius spoke, according to the custom of the ancient actors, under a mask<sup>1</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> Cicero says, therefore, "In ore sunt omnia. In eo autem ipso dominatus est omnis oculorum: quo melius nostri illi senes, qui *personatum, nec Roscium quidem, magnopere laudabant.*" Cic. de Oratore, lib. iii. c. 59.

he consequently could never appear to that advantage upon the stage, which Garrick did, even if he had possessed all the talents of the English actor.

The decorations of the theatres are splendid, and the dress of the actors very becoming. As many ladies appear in the boxes, to see and to be seen, the illuminations of the playhouses are fine, which I found quite the reverse at Paris, as if the Parisians were ashamed to shew their theatres, which, at present, are worth seeing. The English orchestra is well attended, and the music by no means bad. The new prologues and epilogues are generally full of wit and humour. To condemn a new play for the first time in a tumultuous manner, is, at present, not very common, though I have seen instances wherein it was done. I have mentioned in another place, that a censor-office in regard to the press, where a single person, or a whole committee, armed with authority from government, decides whether a manuscript may be printed or not, is unknown in England; but, in regard to the representation of dramatic works, there exists an office of this kind; for the lord chamberlain is to examine every new play, before it be represented the first time; and if he thinks it inadmissible, he may forbid its being brought upon the stage, though

he cannot prevent the printing of it. I have heard, likewise, complaints against some managers of the theatres, who will sometimes act the part of theatrical tyrants, and use dramatic writers rather despotically, when they offer their new works to them for representation. It is said, that they will, now and then, reject them in a pretty arbitrary manner; though it may be suspected that some authors, from a natural predilection for their own productions, will think themselves ill used, when the manager had good reason to decline their offers.

Visiting the theatre is, at present, in England, no disgrace to any body. Playhouses are more frequented now than they were ever before. This renders them so very profitable to managers and players. They are, at present, more productive than they were in Garrick's time. It is even not looked upon as an offence against decorum, to see clergymen there, some Methodists and rigid Calvinists perhaps excepted. Nay, some clergymen, belonging to the established church, will write plays to be acted for the entertainment of the public. Formerly it was not so — “ In Dryden's time,” Dr. Johnson says, “ the drama was very far from that universal ap — probation which it has now obtained. The playhouse was abhorred by the Puritans,

9 Johnson's Lives of the English Poets. vol. ii. p. 47.

“ and avoided by those who desired the character of seriousness or decency. A grave lawyer would have debased his dignity, and a young trader would have impaired his credit, by appearing in those mansions of dissolute licentiousness.” The great propensity of the present English, to see plays of all kinds performed; the crowded playhouses in London; the private theatres, and the spouting-clubs, make a fine contrast with the times in which Dryden lived. It might, perhaps, be wished, for the sake of morality, that the reservedness and seriousness of that age were not, as it seems, totally given up. Numbers of women of easy virtue are to be seen within the theatre; and in the avenues leading to them, which contributes not a little to increase that immorality which playhouses are said to promote. Formerly this class of females, when they frequented the theatre, were obliged to wear either masks, or hats with a black crape, and they were not admitted into every part of the house. At present, they are seen in numbers in the boxes, or any division of the house, among the rest of the company, without the least distinctive mark, impudence perhaps excepted. Nay, they often give the ton in dress, and in an easy and free deportment, to those of their sex who are reputed modest; so that it is attended with some

difficulty to distinguish innocence lost, from that which is supposed still to exist.

Besides the theatres, where regular plays are performed, many are to be found in the outskirts of London; such as Sadler's Wells, the Circus, Astley's amphitheatre, and others, where the audience is entertained with pantomimes, singing, dancing, tumbling, horsemanship, and things of a similar nature. These theatres afford high entertainment to the lower classes of people; but even people of fashion, and foreigners, go there sometimes to gratify their fight, and amuse themselves with observing what human ingenuity can invent, and what art, joined with assiduity, will do to earn a little money, by affording a few hours pleasure to an idle set of spectators.

Attempts have been several times made to have French plays performed in London; but always without success. The jealousy of the national theatres, and the dislike the people have hitherto borne to the French, are the chief causes why these attempts have been frustrated. I expected, that the late commercial treaty with France would have facilitated the introduction of French players, and their theatrical commodities; but things have hitherto remained as they were before.

PART THE SECOND.

ON THE

STATE OF RELIGION.

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ON THE  
STATE OF RELIGION IN  
GENERAL.

ENGLAND, since the Reformation, has been a country of many sects. The two principal of them, the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, have been frequently the cause of civil commotions, particularly during the reign of Charles I. Happily, good sense has got the better over old animosities and prejudices; and though there still subsists a jealousy between the established church and the Dissenters, yet it does not, at present, break forth in open acts of hostility and persecution. The peace is kept, a civil unanimity prevails, and appears at least outwardly. The wise principles which government, within this century, has adopted, and the lenient measures it has pursued, have undoubtedly much contributed to this; perhaps more than might have been otherwise expected, on judging by  
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the experience of former times, from the ideas of toleration, and mutual forbearance, which do no credit to the different religious parties, and the generality of their respective clergy. It was the more easy to render these principles, and the measures founded upon them, efficacious, as England contains such a variety of sects ; for had there been only two, they would have been continually at variance, and would have attempted alternatively to crush each other. The prerogatives and the revenues of the established church are so well secured and protected by government, that there is but little fear or danger, at present, of its continued duration. The best and the most enlightened part of the episcopal clergy are very tolerant ; and though their church does not give itself any trouble in making proselytes, yet it gains more and more ground, because its members enjoy temporal advantages, whilst the interest of the Dissenters is rather sinking. The revolutions recorded in history, which have happened in religion and politics, sufficiently demonstrate, that length of time lessens the authority and value of opinions in churches and in states. The opposite parties, when two or three generations are dead, lose much of their ardour and zeal, particularly, in regard to religion, that sect which has not  
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the advantage of temporal interest on its side. Polemical writings, to the honour of humanity and good sense, begin to sink into contempt; and those that were published a century ago, by the old theological wrestlers, who fought for the entertainment of their different parties, are long ago forgotten, and sold by weight, as waste-paper, for the convenience of shopkeepers to wrap up in them,

“ Quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis.” HOR.

However, though theological publications, at present, are not much sought for, and polemical ones held in a kind of contempt, there are, notwithstanding, some of both, which appear from time to time, but they hardly create any noise, much less alarm. I remember when, some years ago, application was made by the Dissenters to parliament, to be released from subscribing the thirty-nine articles, that controversial writings then appeared without number; and another inundation happened, when the *Confessional* of archdeacon Blackburn appeared. Fanatical and enthusiastical writings meet with success among people inclined that way; and there are more than might be believed, who prefer the mystical, the marvellous, and the incredible, to the plain, sensible, and rational. The writings of our German shoe-maker, Jacob Boehm,

Boehm, or Behmen, as he is called in England, have found more than one English translator, and have passed through several editions. Swedenborg's works have met with still greater success, and he may be looked upon as the founder of a new sect, which holds his writings almost sacred. This proves, that the notion of enlightened times is much to be restricted, and to be taken in a confined sense. It falls to the lot of only a few in an age, to be truly enlightened, and in any nation the generality continue much as usual: the character of the great bulk of mankind remains always the same. It is varied only by the different shades, which are produced by dark ignorance and a little glimmering of knowledge; by more or less glaring vices, and some, here and there, scattered virtues; by the constitution of government, by events, by manners and fashions, which are more or less favourable to the appearance of morality or immorality. On these things the character of times and generations depends; and the effect which they produce taints the judgment of the generality of the people, as well as the writings of the age. Many instances will occur, in what I am going to mention, about the state of religion in England, which will prove this general observation

to be just, and fit to illustrate many things which I shall relate, in regard to the various sects, that would otherwise appear rather unaccountable.

An opinion prevails abroad, that the generality of the English care but little for religion; and, upon the whole, those who think so, are, perhaps, not much mistaken. However, after a long residence among them, I have found, that the effects, which the doctrines of Christianity are intended to produce in life and in society, are in this island, in many instances, more visible, and more frequent, than in countries where more pride is taken in maintaining doctrines which are called orthodox, than in practising virtue, and in shewing the power of religion in actions which are laudable and useful, arising from principles and motives founded upon reason and humanity. Charity, toleration, and mutual forbearance, in regard to religious opinions, are greater in England than in any other part of the world, the United States of America excepted. The sabbath-day is kept in England with more outward decency, than I have seen in many countries; and in churches and meeting-houses, outward decorum and seeming devotion, are very observable, particularly in the country, at some distance from the metropolis. About London, the public  
houses

houses are on Sunday very full indeed ; but the ear of the passengers is not struck with music and dancing, as is too much the case abroad ; nor is there card-playing, except that of late some houses of people of quality, at the west end of the town, have, on a Sunday, resounded with musical concerts, and card-tables have been in use. Upon the whole, Voltaire's description of the manner in which the Sunday passes in London, contains much truth, when he says, " Point d'opéra, point de comédie, " point de concert à Londres le dimanche ; les " cartes même y sont si expréssément défendues, " qu'il n'y a que les personnes de qualité, et " ce qu'on appelle les honêtes-gens, qui " jouent ce jour-là ; le reste de la nation va au " sermon, au cabaret et chez des filles de joie !."

Let the stricter observance of the sabbath-day in Great Britain arise from what causes it may, there is no doubt, but that it keeps awake an outward reverence for religion. Many of those who make their exit on the gallows in London and in the country, will frequently, just before they close the scene of life, address the crowd of spectators, and, among other things, exhort them to keep the sabbath-day

<sup>1</sup> Oeuv. de Voltaire, tom. xiv. p. 61. ed. 4to.

holy,

holy, because their neglecting this was, as they say, the cause of their coming to so untimely an end. Without supposing that such a speech, and the mentioning of the sabbath-day, might have been suggested by the clergyman, who attended them in the prison and at the execution, it is very natural, that these wretches, who are generally young people, should ascribe the cause of their misfortune to their profanation of the sabbath; for on that day, being at leisure, and without proper employ, they pursued in idleness their pleasure, and got into bad company; they became initiated in, and afterwards familiar with vices, that led them to commit the crimes which at last brought them to the gallows. This very observation shews the necessity of setting apart, in the state of society in which we live, such a day as Sunday, to remind its members that are come to a mature age, of their moral duties, and instil good principles into the minds of the younger ones. The English, therefore, are to be commended for keeping up a stricter observance of the sabbath-day, than is generally to be met with in other Christian countries on the continent, in order to excite, and to keep up a sense of morality. The case is different, with regard to the savage Indians, as they are called, for they have

have no property, but subsist on the chance of hunting and fishing; they, therefore, are not so much in want of a sabbath-day as we are.

The holydays which are kept in Roman Catholic, and even in some Protestant countries, are not observed in England, except at the custom-house, and in some departments of the state. To the detriment of commerce, and to the inconvenience of those who have business to transact in such places, no attendance is given on these days, which, in the almanacks, are marked with red types, for the benefit of those who then may choose to indulge themselves in idleness and pleasure. On such days prayers are read in the episcopal churches only; for as to the Dissenters, they have no divine service at all on them.

That outward regard in which the sabbath-day is held in England, cannot be very well reconciled to that carelessness, which, as I have already mentioned in another place, is too manifest in the administering of oaths, which are mostly taken with the greatest unconcern, and I may say, in many instances, with levity. If, for a moment, the great influence of an oath in the concerns of society were set aside, and it were only considered, how much depends on this religious act in England, where a single  
oath

oath decides on life and death in criminal cases, it would appear almost inconceivable, why it is not made more solemn, and why the numberless instances, wherein it is required, are not lessened. Indeed, whoever were to judge of the religious character of the English by the frequency with which oaths are administered, and by the carelessness with which they are taken, would certainly think very unfavourably of them. I have seen many persons, taking oaths at the custom-house, and in courts of judicature, who appeared to me as ignorant, and as totally uninstructed with respect to religion, as can easily be conceived.

To prevent such ignorance, and to promote religious knowledge among the common people, many charity-schools have been instituted in England and Wales, which undoubtedly have produced much good. They have instilled, at least, a few good principles into the minds of many children, and have excited some sense of morality, without which they would have grown up like savages. It is said, that even now, in the remotest parts of Ireland, whole families are to be met with, that know, perhaps, little more of Christianity than the inhabitants of Monomotapa.



For the advancement of religion, societies have also been instituted, of which one of the principal is *The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*. It had its origin in the year 1698, when some well-wishers to religion united among themselves to promote its interests, and those of virtue, which are so closely connected. This society was afterwards made a corporation, and its views are chiefly the two following: first, by erecting such charity-schools in England and in Wales, as I have mentioned before, to advance the interest of religion and virtue among the poor children as well as grown persons; secondly, to promote Christian knowledge in Great Britain, as well as in foreign parts, by means of distributing Bibles, Common-prayer books, and short religious tracts. The number of the members of this society may amount, perhaps, to eight hundred. They are divided into subscribing or contributing, and corresponding members, of which the former constitute by far the greater number. Almost all the dignified clergy of the established church are to be found among them. The revenues of this society are reckoned to be between five and six thousand pounds annually. But it is said, that this subscription money would not be sufficient to defray all the expenses

## RELIGION IN GENERAL. 275

pences of the society, if legacies were not sometimes bequeathed towards the promotion of its designs.

Out of this society another has arisen, which is called *The Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*. As the first directs its views towards erecting charity-schools in Great Britain and Ireland, and the sending missionaries to the East Indies; so this takes care, that the West India islands and the British colonies in North America, are provided with episcopal clergymen and schoolmasters. It is, therefore, in the accounts, which are annually published by the society, expressly mentioned, that those who wish to be employed for such purposes must be members of the established church. Even in the royal charter given to the society in the year 1701, express mention is made, that the contributions of this society shall be employed towards the maintenance of learned and orthodox clergymen, (by which those of the episcopal church are meant), in the British colonies. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, that no Dissenters are among the subscribers.

I shall mention only two societies more, whose intention is the promotion of the Christian religion. The first is a society in Scotland for

*Propagating Christian Knowledge.* The ignorance among the inhabitants of what are called the *Highlands*, and of those isles near Scotland, which, on account of their situation, bear the name of the *Western Islands*, was, even in the beginning of this century, very great. To remedy this evil, the above mentioned society was, under royal patronage, instituted, and government seeing the benefit of it, even in a political light, supported it. The manners of the inhabitants of the Highlands, and the Western Isles, it has been observed, are, since this institution, become milder, and their character, as subjects of the present government, is rendered more loyal than it was before. The other society was established in Ireland about the year 1730, to put a stop to ignorance in religion, and to the growth of immorality, by establishing charity-schools. George I. granted this society a royal charter, to make it a corporation; and the contributions, towards promoting the intentions of the society, became very considerable. But, as I have been informed, those which came from England exceed those collected in Ireland. The Irish society is connected with another here in London, which goes under the name of *The Society corresponding with the Incorporated Society in Dublin,*  
for

*for promoting English Protestant Working Schools in Ireland.* The schools established by this society are called *Charter-Schools*. Thirty-eight of them are for the education of popish and other poor natives, and two, called *Ranelagh Schools*, admit only the children of Protestants. Complaint has been made, and I fear justly, that these excellent charities are much neglected, and that, instead of proving a source of much good, they are, by mismanagement, rather rendered an evil. Many of the children of the Roman catholics in these schools, are trained up in the Protestant religion; and it is said, that this was one of the first intentions which entered into the views of this society, which, indeed, is very commendable.

## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

**A**S I am not to write the ecclesiastical history of Great Britain, or to give an account of the changes which religion has undergone in this island, I shall content myself with giving here only a short account of the episcopal church, and its present state. When, by means of the Reformation, Popery was abolished in the kingdom, this church was to stand in its place, and to be the only established one. For this reason it is called the English church, or that which is established by law; and the Puritans were the first who gave it the name of Episcopal church, because it retained bishops similar to those in the Romish church. Presbyterianism constituting the dominant religion in Scotland, it is called there the established church, and in contradistinction to the English church, *the Church*, or *the Kirk of Scotland*.

The English episcopal church was formerly divided into the *high* and the *low* church. Those who were for extending the authority and the power of bishops, so as to render them and the church

church almost independent of the state, went under the former denomination ; those, on the contrary, who were for extending the power of the king in ecclesiastical matters, and over the bishops, came under the denomination of the low church. The former might be compared to the tories in the state, and the latter to the whigs. I believe, however, that at present the distinction of these church-parties is extremely faint, since in modern times the convocation, or as it may be called the church parliament, is immediately prorogued as soon as it meets, and is as it were almost abolished. The sentiments of the low-churchmen<sup>1</sup> prevail, and very few, it may be supposed, maintain at present those principles which formerly distinguished high-churchmen in the stricter or more eminent sense. The supremacy of the king, as it

<sup>1</sup> A meaning has been annexed to the appellation Low-churchman, different from that in which I take it here. It has been sometimes applied to those who contended, that the difference between the Episcopal and other Protestant churches, was of no great moment, for which reason some strict high-churchmen did not hesitate to reckon them among the *Latitudinarians*. It is to be hoped, however, that there are, in these enlightened times, but few, if any, among the clergy of the established church, who should seriously maintain the old exploded doctrine : *extra ecclesiam*, meaning their own, *nulla datur salus*.

is called, is acknowledged, and the *jus circa sacra* is allowed to be vested in the king and parliament. The hierarchy is said to belong to the episcopal order, but always in subjection to the king. No man can, in the British dominions, legally be made a bishop, without the king's consent. He nominates to the chapters the persons to be chosen, and confirms afterwards the election. Charles II. even wanted the bishops to keep their dignity only during his pleasure; but he could not carry the point, though the same was done in the time of Edward VI. and it was inserted in the new commissions of the bishops then, that they held their office during pleasure. The English constitution makes the king the head of the church; and it has been asserted, that he may preach, and administer the sacraments, if he pleased; for which reason, some of high tory principles have compared the king of England to Melchizedek king of Salem,

Regulations in regard to church affairs have been made, during my residence in England, by acts of parliament relating to toleration, to tithes, and other ecclesiastical matters of consequence. Besides, all suits for divorces are brought before the house of lords, and appeals  
from

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from judgments, pronounced in ecclesiastical courts, lay open to the same as the highest tribunal.

The principal distinctive marks of the English episcopal church, are the Thirty-nine Articles, the Common-Prayer, the Book of Homilies, and the Book of Canons.

Whoever has not been brought up in the English church, will not think himself much edified, when he attends in it for the first time divine service. The Common-Prayer book contains some very excellent prayers; but as they are read all the year round, and frequently without much devotion in a hasty manner, with a voice not always sufficiently loud and intelligible, it is no wonder, that the congregation should appear rather tired, and without many signs of fervent devotion. The alternative reading verses of the Psalms, by the clergyman and the congregation, the loud repeating of the Litany, the Creed, and other parts of the service by the latter, makes it rather resemble a Jewish synagogue. The frequent repetition of the reading of the prayers, and the psalms, is the cause, that many of those who constantly attend the church, know both by heart; and therefore their thoughts seem to be much absent, when they recite this part of the service.



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service. It is said to have been the intention, at the time when the Liturgy received the sanction of authority in the reign of queen Elizabeth, to give the divine service in the established churches a kind of solemnity; but, I confess, that it seems to me, not to produce such an effect, at least not in an eminent degree. There is nothing which strikes the eye; the singing is generally not very harmonious; that recitation of some parts of the service, which, as I have observed before, is divided between the clergyman and the congregation, is done in a manner that betrays rather carelessness than attention; the perpetual motion of kneeling and rising again, that monotony which prevails, and that inanimated manner in which the sermons are commonly delivered, have, in my opinion, nothing of solemnity in them, and can hardly promote edification and devotion. I do not mention this as a censure, or as if I were a great admirer of solemnity, or a friend to external shew in divine worship, though I think it for several reasons rather necessary; but I confess, paradox as it may appear, that a silent congregation in a Quaker's meeting, is, in my eyes, more solemn than the most pompous celebration of divine service.

The

The subjects of the sermons preached in episcopal churches are generally of the moral kind, which certainly is much to be approved. Tillotson, in his time, had some reasons to bring the controversies of the Romish church into the pulpit, but there is probably less occasion for it at present. That the episcopal clergymen preach no longer than about half an hour, if even so long, is much to be commended. Superfluous declamation, which in sermons that require an hour in delivering is almost inevitable, may, by these means, be avoided, if care be taken; and the impression which the discourse should make upon the hearers, may, by being short, though without obscurity, be the more certain and the stronger. Few clergymen deliver their discourses without looking often into their notes, and they are commonly, for that reason more esteemed; but the generality come under that description which I have given above in my short account of the state of pulpit-eloquence\*.

According to the Rubrick, which is printed before the Common-Prayer-book, the rector or vicar of a parish should catechise the children in the afternoon of the Sunday; but, useful as this would be, it is nevertheless neglected. The catechism of the church of England, as it is in-

serted in the Common-Prayer-book, is very short, and takes up but three or four pages. It may be deemed, therefore, the more necessary to explain it to the children, who, if ever they learn it by heart, recite it without understanding it. Several clergymen of the church of England have written explanations or commentaries on this Catechism; and that of archbishop Wake has been much approved, and therefore, passed through many editions. He wrote it when he was bishop of Lincoln, and dedicated it to the clergy of his diocese. In this dedication, he gives a short history of the English church Catechism, and of catechising: he laments, that the latter is totally neglected on Sundays, and that the parishioners hire a preacher, under the denomination of an afternoon-lecturer, who is to preach according to their fancy.

The English churches, and what belongs to them, are generally kept very neat, and in good repair; which is the more easy to be done, as the churchwardens have a right, under acts of parliament, to make assessments, and raise taxes, called church-rates, for the repairs and the necessities of the parish-church. The laws of the land have so well taken care of the established church, and the clergy who are in possession of livings and preferments, that they cannot want, as long as there are inhabited

habited houses and cultivated lands in the parish. Not only the episcopal inhabitants, but Quakers, Jews, and all denominations of Dissenters, must serve parish offices, and pay their church-rates and tithes. The ground upon which a church is to be built, or which is only designed for a church-yard, is previously consecrated by a bishop; and it cannot afterwards be used for any profane purposes, except permission be obtained by an act of parliament. In former times, such consecrated grounds were deemed to be very holy; for there is a law, which, not being repealed, may even now be put in force, that if any person strikes another in a church, or a church-yard, with a weapon, or only draws the same with an intent to strike, he is, upon conviction, not only to be excommunicated, but also to lose one of his ears. Parish or episcopal churches alone are intitled to a steeple and bells, which, therefore, is not the case with places of worship belonging to Dissenters. As the English are very fond of ringing bells, the churches are frequently furnished with a set of them, that may be rung in some musical manner; which, though it makes an intolerable noise, is, nevertheless, thought by many highly entertaining. Besides, what with prayers, burials, and other occasions, the bells are every day as frequently in motion, as in the monast-

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monasteries and churches in Roman catholic countries. I once lived near a church-yard in London, where there is, what they call an excellent set of bells; and I would, from my own experience, advise those who love quietness or study, to keep at a good distance from churches.

It is not exactly known, when the division of England into parishes took place; but they are undoubtedly of a very ancient date, and it is certain that such a division was made before the twelfth century. Tithes were introduced before the beginning of the ninth. The parishes are very exact in marking their boundaries, and the school-boys are to wander round them, on Ascension-day, that they may, when grown old, give evidence in case of any dispute which may arise between neighbouring parishes. There are said to be ten thousand parishes in England; consequently, there should be as many livings; but numbers of them produce so small an income, that a clergyman cannot subsist on it. Dr. Burn gives the following account of the poorer livings, taken from the book of rates, made in the reign of Henry the Eighth: 1071, are not above ten pounds a year; 1476, not above twenty; 1126, not above thirty; 1049, not above forty; and 884, not above fifty. At this rate there would be 5597 livings

livings not above fifty pounds a year. It ought, however, to be remembered, that since the time, when these estimates were made, many livings have greatly increased in regard to income, though others have not.

Before the Reformation took place, the income and the tithes of all ecclesiastical benefices and livings, when they became vacant, were to be paid, under the name of first-fruits, for a year to the pope, those of ten pounds value only excepted. After the Reformation, this kind of revenue was annexed to the income of the crown, until the reign of queen Anne, when, by an act of parliament, it was ordered, that all livings under fifty pounds should be exempted from paying the first-fruits; and that those which produced more should pay them, but the emoluments arising therefrom, should go to a perpetual fund, then established, to increase the incomes of those livings that were under fifty pounds. However, notwithstanding this good and generous regulation, the incomes of the poorer livings are not much raised; and it has been calculated, that 500 years would be required, before they could be raised to sixty, and 339 before they would amount to fifty only. Dr. Watson, the present bishop of Landaff, proposed, therefore, in a  
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last publication, that the richer benefices should be somewhat lowered, to increase by these means those that are very poor; but it seems as if this plan of the worthy bishop would not meet with success.

As many of the livings are so very poor, that they alone cannot maintain a clergyman, it has been necessary to unite for this purpose more parishes; and I am inclined to think, that in England hardly three thousand clergymen of the episcopal church are provided with ecclesiastical preferments. The value of livings depend on the number and the circumstances of the parishioners, and the tithes. The church and its clergy, considered in connexion with the state, is esteemed very rich, on account of the landed estates, and the tithes which it has in possession. Supposing the tithes to be really and fully paid to the clergy, it may be said, that the church has every ten years the whole produce of the national lands. And how much greater would its income be, if at the time of the Reformation, so many monasteries had not been secularised! The cathedrals still enjoy very rich estates, which then were not taken from them, and the value of their lands is since the Reformation risen five, nay, in some parts of the kingdom, as it is said, ten times higher than

than it was then: Those livings, therefore, which have large tithes, are very valuable, and more so than those where the rector has his income from assessments upon the houses in his parish. The tithes, whether they be taken in kind, or according to value, keep always in proportion with the prices of things as they are in succession of time; and when agriculture and rural œconomy increase in a parish, the income of the living increases likewise. Where the parish-priest has his revenues merely from taxes upon houses, the income generally remains the same, unless the parishioners, who are liberal, become wealthy, or the number of dwellings increases.

The Dissenting clergy may perform any clerical function, except that of marriage, which, by an act of parliament, is limited to parish-churches and the episcopal clergy only. But as this act does not extend over Scotland, those who cannot lawfully be married in England, run away to that country, and mostly to a place called Gretna Green, where connubial knots are tied without any previous licence, and without the assistance of a clergyman of any church, marriages by a layman being legal in Scotland. It may be supposed, that government could easily put a stop to this kind of



marriages ; but as it has been thought proper to pass so strict a marriage-act, as that of the year 1754, a hole is, for many reasons, to be left for those who want to avoid it ; and if the road to Scotland, on such expeditions, were to be barred, the enchanted couple would find the way to the continent, to have the rites of the church performed there, which, from policy, is to be prevented, by keeping the road to Scotland open.

No taxes are collected, and no demands exacted in England with greater rigour, than those of the established church. Excommunication, seizing of goods, or even imprisonment, are the means by which payments of this kind are enforced. The ecclesiastical courts are likewise complained of as very severe. It is said of Dr. Johnson, a great admirer of the established church, that when he had communicated a part of his tragedy called *Irene* to a friend to read, he returned it with bestowing much praise upon its author ; expressing, at the same time, his fear, that the catastrophe, in the last act of the play, would not be sufficiently tragical, the doctor having exhausted himself too much in the preceding acts. But Johnson gravely answered, “ Sir, I have materials enough for my purpose ; for in the last  
“ act,

“*act*; I intend to put my heroine into the ecclesiastical court of Litchfield, which will fill up the utmost measure of human calamity.” The law-suits in an ecclesiastical court are tedious and expensive; the witnesses are not examined before a jury, which is to decide; but their depositions are taken in writing, and afterwards argued upon in court before a judge who decides.

The English ecclesiastical law resembles somewhat a chaos, for it consists of some fragments of the Roman and the canon law, the former of which is to give way when it comes in collision with the latter, and both are to yield to the statute law, whenever they are in opposition to it. In the year 1603, when king James I. came to the throne, the clergy, under the authority of the two archbishops of Canterbury and of York, drew up a number of constitutions and canons, intended to serve as a kind of ecclesiastical law, which were confirmed by the king for himself and his successors; but they are of no great authority. Lord Hardwicke, in a cause, where they were said to be transgressed, gave it, in the year 1737, as his own opinion, and that of the rest of the judges, that they were not binding for the laity, though they might be so for the clergy; and the principal

cial reason which he alleged, was, that they had not received the sanction of parliament. Dr. Gibson, before he became bishop of London, published in the year 1713, in two volumes folio, a Collection of English Ecclesiastical Laws, but the work appears to me too prolix, and the method by which he has digested it, not very convenient. Dr. Burn's Ecclesiastical Law, in four octavo volumes, is much better adapted for the purpose, the materials being disposed in alphabetical order, in form of a Dictionary.

Among the ecclesiastical tribunals, the convocation was formerly the first and highest, but it is not so now. It had its origin, if I am not mistaken, about the year 1295, under Edward I. and was, as it seems, intended for a kind of ecclesiastical parliament, chiefly with a view to grant the subsidies that were demanded of the clergy, who were, in those times, looked upon as distinct from the state or the political body. This appears to me to be the reason, why a person in priest's orders is supposed to be incapable to have a seat in the lower-house of parliament; for the bishops, as I have already observed elsewhere, do not sit in the upper-house in their clerical character, but as barons of the realm. In the reign of king Edward IV. the  
lower-

lower-house of convocation applied for the liberty of sitting with the commons in parliament; but the demand was rejected. At present the clergy having given up their right of taxing themselves in convocation, under Charles II. are taxed, with the rest of the nation, by parliament, and the rectors and vicars have a vote at parliamentary elections, though not in their clerical character, but because their livings are considered as freeholds. As often as a new parliament is called together, a convocation is likewise convened by royal proclamation; but almost as soon as it has met, it is prorogued from time to time; and it may be said, that from the year 1718, the convocation has held, properly speaking, no sessions<sup>3</sup>.

The clergy of the established church is, in regard to rank, divided into *dignitaries* and the *inferior clergy*. In the former are included the archbishops, bishops, deans, canons, and archdeacons; and in the latter the rectors, vicars, and curates. Another distinction arises from the different ordinations. The first of them is for deacon's orders, the second to become a priest, and the third a bishop. England has

<sup>3</sup> An account of the ecclesiastical courts in England is given in the German original, but as many English books treat of them very amply, it is not translated.

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two archbishops and five and twenty bishops. They all have their seats in the house of lords, except the bishop of Sodor and Man, because he has his dignity not from the king. It was William the Conqueror, who raised the landed estates belonging to bishopricks into baronies; and it is for this reason, as I have already mentioned, that they sit in parliament. If we were to judge of the incomes of the bishopricks, by the sums which are put down in what are called the king's books, they would appear very small, and rather apostolical; but as they are increased by revenues arising from other ecclesiastical lucrative places<sup>4</sup>, they amount to five or six times the value of what they are put down for there. I have seen calculations of the expences of the nation, for the support of the established church, which fix them at very near three millions annually; but I have read lately, in a publication of the bishop of Landaff, another estimate, according to which the whole, even the two universities included, does not amount to more than a million and a half; but, whether the value of the tithes be included in this sum, I do not know.

<sup>4</sup> The bishops of London have had seats as commissioners of the board of trade, the income of which was put down in the Court Calendar at 1000*l.* per annum.

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It is not very difficult to obtain orders in the church, particularly in the dioceses of some bishops; a few recommendations, even of laymen, may often procure them. This has been frequently complained of, and it were to be wished, that the character and the learning of those who request ordination, were more strictly enquired into. The regulations, which were made in the year 1724, respecting the candidates who wished to take orders, are extremely good, but I believe they are not strictly adhered to. Much less are they regarded, when the object is, if I may so call it, foreign service. Thus a bishop of London, Dr. Terrick, ordained a German journeyman jeweller, of a very indifferent character, and of no learning whatever, who, after having created much mischief in one of our German congregations, wanted to go as an episcopal clergyman to America, and obtained his wishes. The church and the army are great resources for the younger sons of people of rank; and it therefore often happens, that many of the best livings, and lucrative places in the church, which are almost sinecures, are bestowed upon them, though they are, perhaps, destitute of learning and merit. As they get into possession of them, by means of their relations and powerful patron-

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age, it is no wonder, that admission into orders is not rendered difficult, either by means of rigorous examinations, or a strict inquiry into moral character.

Whether many of the established church think, in these more enlightened times, so highly of their episcopal ordinations as some have done formerly, I am unable to determine. In conversations which I have had upon this subject with some worthy and learned clergymen, who enjoyed church preferments, I have asked them, whether they believed in an uninterrupted succession of their bishops since the times of the apostles? whether they were sensible, that they had, at the moment of their ordination, received some extraordinary spiritual gifts from the hands of the bishops who ordained them, he being endowed with certain peculiar *χαρακτῆρες*, derived from the supernatural gifts which were bestowed upon the apostles, at the first promulgation of Christianity? They smiled at my questions, and answered them as men of good sense and probity would do. The inferences, however, which were drawn from the suppositions I have just mentioned, seem to be still in force. Clergymen, not ordained by the hands of bishops, are deemed unqualified to officiate in a clerical character in English churches of the

the establishment. Those who have received their ordination from the hands of a Romish, a Greek, or a Lutheran bishop, are not re-ordained, when they go over in a clerical character, to the church of England; but all other protestant clergymen, though they have been ordained with ever so much solemnity, and under the highest authority, are to undergo this ceremony again, before they can officiate as clergymen in an English church under the establishment. Very few, however, if any, will be found at present, who would seriously assert the invalidity of ecclesiastical functions, performed by clergymen not ordained by bishops, or who would entertain such an opinion, as the celebrated Dodwell did, who asserted that episcopal baptism was not only absolutely necessary for salvation, but the very means by which immortality was conveyed to the soul of man. That tenet of the Romish church, which declares the character acquired by episcopal ordination to be indelible<sup>s</sup>, has been adopted likewise in the church of England; but, from some instances, which have happened during my residence in England, I have reason to think, that it is not

<sup>s</sup> Si quis dixerit, eum, qui sacerdos semel fuit, laicum rursus fieri posse; Anathema sit. *Concil. Trident. Sess. xxiii. c. 4. Canon iv.*



so strictly supported and adhered to, as would, perhaps, have been the case, in the beginning of this century.

According to some ecclesiastical canons, no person should receive deacon's orders before he has attained the age of twenty-two, nor priest's orders before twenty-four; but I believe this is not always strictly observed. In queen Elizabeth's time, a deacon could, according to some statutes then made, be put in possession of a living when he was twenty-three years of age; but this was altered in the reign of Charles II. and it was ordered, that no person should be introduced into a living, without having previously obtained priest's orders. With us, in our protestant churches in Germany, hardly any body is ever ordained, except he be previously called to, or provided with a living. In the English church it is not so, for a person may be ordained, if he only shews to the bishop, from whom he is to receive orders, a certificate from a clergyman possessed of a living, that he will employ the candidate for orders, as his curate or substitute. Sometimes, even such a certificate, as it is said, is dispensed with; but I believe, that this is not frequently done, for the bishop, who ordains a person without such a security, may stand a chance, according to  
some

some ancient laws, either to maintain a person thus ordained, if he should be indigent, at his own expence, or provide him with a living.

The highest and last of ordinations is that of a bishop, which does not take place, unless the person to be ordained is previously presented to a bishoprick. Suffragan bishops, or *chor-episcopi*, are not at present in England. Formerly, when bishops were made high chancellors, or even sent on foreign embassies, it was more necessary for them to have substitutes than now. It is likewise very seldom that an archbishop or bishop is provided with a *coadjutor*, on account of great age. The old custom, according to which a newly chosen bishop was to pretend great reluctance in accepting a diocese, and to exclaim, *nolo episcopari*, is now, as a strange farce, for well known reasons, laid aside. There are, however, instances, though very seldom, where the acceptance of a bishoprick has been actually refused; and I believe Dr. Samuel Clarke was the last who did it. Among the present bishops are several who have raised themselves to that dignity by merit, and the excellence of their character; but it is said, that bishopricks are more frequently obtained by the patronage of the great, or by high family connections. Translations from

one episcopal see to another are very frequent<sup>6</sup>, and are occasioned either by death, or deprivation. An instance of the latter kind has not happened, since the time of Dr. Atterbury, the bishop of Rochester. A new bishop, at the time of his ordination, is to make oath that he acknowledges the king for the head of the church, and that he will obey his archbishop. Whether he is to promise as formerly, that he will always reside in his diocese, I do not know; probably it is laid aside, because, as the bishops attend the parliament, it is almost impossible for any of the bench to perform such a promise, except the bishop of London. After the ordination of a bishop, a grand dinner or entertainment used to be given by him, which custom has given rise to that calumny, related by several writers, and particularly by Voltaire as a fact, that Dr. Parker was ordained an archbishop in the Nag's-head-tavern in Cheapside. It is to be regretted, that such idle tales should be repeated, for di-

<sup>6</sup> The worthy bishop of Landaff, Dr. Watson, in his well-known *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, proposed several years ago to render the incomes of bishopricks more equal to each other, that the frequency of translations from one see to another might be prevented. He gives the best reasons why his advice should be adopted; but hitherto nothing has been done.

version's sake, as truth, when Voltaire knew whilst he wrote it, or at least should have known it, that this absurd story was refuted even by Puritans themselves<sup>7</sup>. Though a plurality of livings is suffered in the English church, yet I need hardly mention, that no bishop ever holds two bishopricks.

A chapter, with a dean at their head, was instituted with a view to be the bishop's council, and to assist him with advice in the religious as well as the temporal concerns of his see. But as affairs have greatly altered since, and there seems at present very little occasion for such chapters, it has been proposed, if not totally to abolish them, at least to diminish their revenues, in order to mend the poor church-livings with the deduction. Wholesome as such advice might be, and however patriotic the intention of those who proposed it, yet I think, in the present situation of things, it will hardly be adopted, unless a reformation should take place, in which the clergy find themselves under the necessity of being only passive.

Besides the deans of chapters, there are prebendaries or canons, archdeacons, rural deans,

<sup>7</sup> NEAL's History of the Puritans, vol. i. p. 142.

rectors,

rectors, vicars, and curates. It would be superfluous to speak of these different ecclesiastical characters more amply here, as they are well known, and as there are so many books which treat of these matters very circumstantially<sup>8</sup>. I shall content myself with a few observations relative to curates. This class of ecclesiastics is entirely unknown in our protestant provinces in Germany, or in Denmark, Sweden, or Prussia. In England they are men who generally have received an education in one of the two universities, and being without a living<sup>9</sup>, though they have taken orders, are hired by other clergymen to officiate for them, because they have either more preferments, or are, from various reasons, not inclined to do their duty themselves, notwithstanding they are well paid for it. The parishioners see, perhaps, their rector or vicar only once or twice a year, when he comes to collect his revenues; nay, I have heard that in some parishes the pastor never appears any more among his flock, after he has taken for the first time possession of the living. Among the curates are many learned and deserving men, who merited the best

<sup>8</sup> Among many others I may refer the reader to Blackstone's Commentaries, book I. chap. xi. vol. i. p. 376.

<sup>9</sup> Some few perhaps may have small livings.

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preferment, instead of drudging all their lives for the benefit of others who enjoy the fruit of their labours. They are frequently oppressed with cares for the support of a family, because those who hire them to do all their duty, allow only thirty or forty pounds, if even so much, for their annual stipend, out of their sometimes large incomes. This, indeed, is a great grievance a considerable part of the episcopal clergy labours under, and which can by no means promote the dignity of the clerical character, as many of these curates, on account of their small allowance, will degrade themselves to do things which cannot possibly increase their respect among the parishioners, who are entrusted to their care.

In regard to clerical functions, there are two, which in the English church, can only be performed by bishops; and these are the ordination of clergymen, and the confirmation of children. The rest falls to the share of the other clergy; such as preaching, reading prayers, administering the sacrament, baptizing, marrying, visiting the sick, and burying the dead. Marriages, as I have before observed, can at present only be solemnized in parish-churches, and those who want to be married, are either to have the banns published on three suc-

successive Sundays, in a parish-church, or they must produce a licence for that purpose, from the bishop's court, to the clergyman who is to marry them. Funerals are in England generally very expensive ; but the pomp with which they are performed, has, in my opinion, hardly any thing that could produce sensations in the minds of those that attend them, suitable to the fight which they have before them. Every thing seems to be done with perfect indifference ; and the English, in regard to such a shew, and the expences it requires, are unmindful of the good advice which Pythagoras insinuated, when he spoke against cypress-coffins.

Excommunication, as a sentence pronounced in a spiritual court, was formerly of more consequence than now ; yet those who are under it, are, as Blackstone says <sup>10</sup>, disabled from serving upon juries, from giving evidence in any court, or bringing an action, either real or personal, to recover lands or money due to them. Nay, if the excommunicated person does not submit to the sentence of the spiritual court, within forty days after it is given, he may be imprisoned, till he is reconciled to the church, and such reconciliation certified by

<sup>10</sup> Commentaries, vol. iii. p. 102.

the bishop. However, such sentences of excommunication are now very seldom pronounced; and how far the required reconciliation to the church could take place, if a Dissenter were the culprit, I do not very well conceive. Lord George Gordon has been, within these few years, the only one that I remember, who was excommunicated; but he seemed to regard it very little, and I believe that no reconciliation between him and the church is ever to be expected. Indeed, if excommunication were to follow in all those instances, where it is to be inflicted according to the ecclesiastical law, in cases of perjury, heresy, adultery, fornication, and similar transgressions, I am inclined to think, that at least one third of the inhabitants of England, and many who think themselves of consequence in church and state, would labour under the inconveniencies of excommunication.

I shall conclude this article relative to the episcopal church, with a few remarks only. As to the learning and erudition of its clergy, it can boast of many eminent men. However, the Tillotson's, the Sherlock's, the Potter's, the Clarke's, the Mill's, the Whitby's, the Derham's, the Middleton's, the Pococke's, the Jortin's, the Lowth's, the Watson's, begin



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to be scarce. The number of those who excel in the knowledge of ancient languages is not great; and, perhaps, those who are much skilled in modern languages still less. Theological knowledge, as Dr. Prideaux observes, is not much cultivated. "Young men," he says, "frequently come to the university, without any knowledge or tincture of religion at all; and have little opportunity of improving themselves therein, whilst undergraduates, because the course of their studies inclines them to philosophy, and other kinds of learning; and they are usually admitted to the first degree of bachelors of arts, with the same ignorance as to all sacred learning, as when first admitted into the university; and many of them, as soon as they have taken that degree, offering themselves for orders, are too often admitted to be teachers in the church, when they are only fit to be catechumens therein." I have already mentioned, that the fundamental doctrines of the English church are contained in the Thirty-nine Articles, and whoever is introduced to a living, or accepts of any ecclesiastical preferment in the same, is obliged to subscribe to them, and if he be rector or vicar of a parish, to read them pub-

<sup>1</sup> Life of Dr. Prideaux. London, 1748. p. 91.

licly

licly at the time of his induction. Some years ago it was thought, that the episcopal clergy had an intention of revising and altering these articles, and by expunging what favoured too much of Calvin's doctrine, to admit a greater latitude for Arminianism; but nothing of this kind has hitherto happened. Whether it be true, as I have heard it asserted, that a great and the most learned part of the episcopal clergy, are inclined either to Arminianism or to Socinianism, I am unable to decide. Some of the more conscientious clergymen of the church have, of late years, resigned their livings, and declared themselves publicly to be Anti-trinitarians; but it may be well supposed, that many more, from political and financial reasons, do not think it adviseable to follow such an example. In this respect they have even bishop Burnet for an advocate, who is of opinion, that every one who subscribes to the Thirty-nine Articles, has a right to interpret their meaning as he thinks proper, and consistently with his private opinions.

There are among the episcopal clergy many worthy, learned, and exemplary men, but I fear, that there is too great a number of an opposite character, and who contribute very little to keep up the dignity of their order. A

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living author, whom I have before quoted, and who was himself bred in one of the English universities, says very pointedly, "The public have long remarked with indignation, that some of the most distinguished coxcombs, drunkards, debauchees, and gamesters, who shine at the watering-places, and in all public places, but pulpits, are young men of the sacerdotal order". No dissenting clergyman, whilst I have been in England, was ever punished with death as a criminal; but more than one of the established church have suffered on the gallows. The greediness with which some of them are in pursuit of many livings, or church-preferments; the severe manner in which others collect and exact their tithes, besides many other glaring blemishes, are exposed publicly in satirical prints, in writings, and on the stage, but, as it seems, to little purpose. The great want of subsistence and poverty of some, contrasted with the prodigality and affluence of others, contribute too much to the lessening of the esteem of the clergy among the people. Many, if I may so express it, are burthened with preferment and income, whilst others, sometimes deserving men, are almost starving

\* Knox's Essays, vol. i. Essay xvii. p. 90.

with

with their families, for want of the necessaries of life. The trade which is carried on with livings and advowsons, and the advertisements in the public papers relative to it, are things which a protestant foreigner, when he comes over to England, can at first hardly credit. Whoever possesses, as a layman, the right of disposing of a living, regards it generally either as a part of his revenue, or as a provision for one of his children. The prices of an advowson, or a living, are regulated by the value of the flock, and the income of the shepherd. There are, it is true, proper laws against simony, but I am apprehensive, that they are frequently and easily evaded.

If the selling and buying of ecclesiastical preferments be liable to censure and blame, the plurality of livings, in the hands of one person, is not less, if not more so. Whoever has the most powerful patrons, or the most numerous friends, or who can spend the most money, may be sure of having the best preferments; when, in the mean time, the deserving, the learned ecclesiastic, for want of patrons, family connexions, or money, may be condemned to pass his whole life as a poor curate, and to lament, that industry, integrity, and knowledge, are not always the means for a man to advance

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himself in this world, where merit and virtue are often spoken of highly, but still oftener neglected. According to the ecclesiastical laws, a clergyman who has more livings than one, should, within the year, reside on each at least thirteen weeks ; but this, I believe, is not much observed. By the same laws, if different livings are in the possession of but one clergyman, they should not be above twenty miles distant from each other ; but this likewise is often dispensed with.

METHOD-

## M E T H O D I S T S.

**T**HIS sect, considering its origin, is an excrescence out of the church of England, which is the reason why I introduce it here immediately. Whitefield and Wesley, its founders, were both members of the university of Oxford, and both received an episcopal ordination. Besides, many esteemed men among the Methodists, such as a Romaine, a Madan, a Rowland Hill, and others, are of the episcopal church.

Mr. John Wesley has published, on half a sheet of paper, *A Short History of Methodism*<sup>3</sup>, which, indeed, is but a very imperfect sketch. He says, “ that in November 1729, he himself  
 “ and his brother Charles, with two other stu-  
 “ dents at Oxford, began to spend some even-  
 “ ings in a week together, in reading chiefly  
 “ the Greek Testament. In the next year, they  
 “ were joined by about four other students, and  
 “ in 1732 by about six or seven more. The  
 “ late Mr. Whitefield was permitted to meet

<sup>3</sup> London, 1774, 8vo.

“ with them in 1735. The exact regularity of  
 “ their lives, as well as their studies, occasioned  
 “ a young gentleman of Christ-church to say,  
 “ Here is a new sect of Methodists sprung up ;  
 “ alluding to some ancient physicians who were  
 “ so called. The name was new and quaint,  
 “ so it took immediately, and the Methodists  
 “ were known all over the university. They  
 “ were all zealous members of the church of  
 “ England, not only of her doctrines, but of  
 “ her discipline. They were likewise zealous  
 “ observers of all the university-statutes, be-  
 “ cause they conceived it was bound upon  
 “ them by the Bible, it being their own desire  
 “ and design to be downright Bible Christians.  
 “ They were charged with being *righteous over-*  
 “ *much*, and abundantly too scrupulous. In  
 “ October, 1735, Mr. Wesley, accompanied  
 “ by his brother and Mr. Ingham, left Eng-  
 “ land, with a design to go and to preach to  
 “ the Indians in Georgia. But the rest of the  
 “ gentlemen continued to meet, till one and  
 “ another was ordained, and left the university.  
 “ By which means, in about two years time,  
 “ scarcely any of them were left. In February,  
 “ 1738, Mr. Whitefield went over to Georgia,  
 “ with a design to assist Mr. John Wesley ; but  
 “ Mr. Wesley just then returned to England.

“ Soon after he had a meeting with Mess. Ing-  
 “ ham, Stonhouse, Hall, Hutchings, Kinch-  
 “ ing, and a few other clergymen, who all re-  
 “ solved to be Bible-Christians at all events,  
 “ and, wherever they were, to preach with all  
 “ their might, plain, old, Bible-Christianity.  
 “ They began to be convinced, that men are  
 “ saved by grace through faith, and this salva-  
 “ tion by faith became their standing topic.  
 “ In a short time, they became popular preach-  
 “ ers, the congregations were large, wherever  
 “ they preached, and the gentlemen, with their  
 “ followers, were intituled Methodists. Mr.  
 “ Whitefield being returned, in March 1741, to  
 “ England, entirely separated from Mr. Wef-  
 “ ley and his friends, because he did not hold  
 “ *the decrees*. Here was the first breach, which  
 “ warm men persuaded Mr. Whitefield to make,  
 “ merely for a difference of opinion. There  
 “ were now two sorts of Methodists, so called;  
 “ those for *particular*, and those for *general* re-  
 “ demption. Not many years passed, before  
 “ William Cudworth and James Rely separated  
 “ from Mr. Whitefield. They were properly  
 “ Antinomians, absolute, avowed enemies to  
 “ the law of God, which they never preached;  
 “ or professed to preach, but termed all *Legalists*  
 “ who did. Yet these were still denominated Me-  
 “ thodists,



“ thodists, also differing from Mr. Whitefield,  
 “ both in judgment and practice, abundantly  
 “ more than Mr. Whitefield did from Mr. Wes-  
 “ ley. In the mean time, Mr. Venn and Mr.  
 “ Romaine began to be spoken of, and not  
 “ long after Mr. Madan and Mr. Berridge,  
 “ with a few other clergyman, who, although  
 “ they had no connexion with each other, but  
 “ as Bible-Christians, were soon included in the  
 “ general name of Methodists. In 1762,  
 “ George Bell, and a few other persons, began  
 “ to speak great words. In the latter end of  
 “ the year, they foretold, that the world would  
 “ be at an end on the 28th of February. Mr.  
 “ Wesley, with whom they were then connect-  
 “ ed, withstood them both in public and pri-  
 “ vate. This they would not endure; so, in  
 “ January and February 1763, they separated  
 “ from him, under the care of Mr. Maxfield,  
 “ one of Mr. Wesley’s preachers. But still  
 “ Mr. Maxfield, and his adherents, even the  
 “ wildest enthusiasts among them, go under  
 “ the general name of Methodists. At present,  
 “ those who remain with Mr. Wesley are  
 “ mostly church of England men. They love  
 “ her articles, her homilies, her liturgy, her  
 “ discipline, and unwillingly vary from it in  
 “ any instance.” This is the substance of Mr.  
Wesley’s

Westley's account of Methodism, which I have given in his own words. What a true church of England man thinks of them, may be guessed from the character which the late bishop of Bristol, Dr. Newton, has drawn of them, in his works, published after his death. "Every  
 "tabernacle of Methodists," he says, "is in  
 "truth a school and seminary for papists; and  
 "the teachers, whether they know it or not,  
 "are agents and factors for popery: and they  
 "seem to be possessed of the same spirit, as  
 "they aspire to the same dominion and lord-  
 "ship over God's heritage; affect the same  
 "powers, privileges, and prerogatives; excel  
 "in the same arts of sophistry and evasion,  
 "equivocation and mental reservation; make  
 "the same merchandise of the word of God,  
 "usurp the same authority over the purses and  
 "consciences of their disciples, drain the few  
 "rich and wealthy of their substance, wring  
 "even from the hard hands of the poor labour-  
 "ers and servants their small pittance, and by  
 "all means make their religion their gain, or  
 "it would be no religion for them." I confess, that this picture appears to me much over-charged, and rather to prove what some have accused the bishop with, that he was a weak and bigotted man. A foreign gentleman,  
 when

when he visited England on his travels, asked a Presbyterian clergyman, what sort of people the Methodists were, and he gave for answer, " They are a kind of madmen, who talk a great deal of justification by faith, speak of a perfection of sanctity and holiness to which a poor mortal, in this world, may arrive, and arrogate to themselves a kind of spiritual and ecclesiastical authority." There is some truth in this answer; and he might have added, that some of them are rank enthusiasts.

The Methodists cannot be called a sect by itself, in the strictest sense of the word; for they are, if I may use the expression, incorporated into almost all other sects in England, the Quakers excepted. Mr. Wesley will by no means allow, that a Methodist is distinguishable by his doctrines, when he says, " The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. His assenting to this or that scheme of religion, his embracing any particular set of notions, his espousing the judgment of one man or of another, are all quite wide of the point <sup>4</sup>." On the contrary, he gives the following description of a Methodist, when he asks, " What is a Me-

<sup>4</sup> The character of a Methodist, by John Wesley, 3d edit. *It is but half a sheet.*

Methodist

“thodist according to your own account?” I answer, “A Methodist is one, who has the “love of God shed abroad in his heart, by “the Holy Ghost given unto him<sup>5</sup>.” As I freely own, that this description is unintelligible to me, I forbear to make any remarks upon it; but I cannot help observing, that Mr. Wesley, in saying, that a Methodist is not to be distinguished by his opinions, seems to have forgotten, that he himself, in his short account of Methodism, which I have before mentioned, enumerates different sorts of Methodists, distinguishable by their opinions, some of whom he calls Universalists, others Particularists, some Antinomians, and others False Prophets. Mr. Wesley styles himself an Arminian, and has published what he calls “The Arminian Magazine;” though some, who are acquainted with the history of Arminianism, might have good reason to think, that he was not well informed of the tenets of that sect, by his having intimated in his Magazine, as well as in another small publication<sup>6</sup>, that the doctrine of Calvin differed from that of Arminius, only because the former asserted ab-

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> The Question: What is an Arminian? answered, by a  
a Lover of Free Grace. Bristol. 1770. *Only half a sheet.*  
solute

folute predestination, and the latter conditional.

At first, the doctrine of the founders of Methodism, was exactly that of the church of England, and even in the old style, strictly orthodox; but it soon became tainted with fanaticism, which appeared both in their sermons and their writings. Whoever will attend sermons in their tabernacles, or peruse Mr. Whitefield's Journal and several of Mr. Wesley's publications, will soon be convinced of this. *A brief Narrative of the Revival of Religion in Virginia, in a Letter to a Friend*, is now before me, in which almost every page abounds with proofs of the most glaring enthusiasm, which sound reason never will call the revival of religion. I shall, however, transcribe only part of a letter, in the 17th page, which is signed Thomas Saunders, where he says, "It is common with us, for men and women, to fall down as dead under an exhortation; but many more under prayer; perhaps, twenty at a time. And some that have not fallen to the earth, have shewn the same distress, wringing their hands, smiting their breasts, and begging all to pray for them. With these the work is generally quick, some getting through in less than a week, some in two or three days, some in one,

7 London, 1779, 4th edit.

"two,

“two, or three hours. Nay, we have an instance of one that was so indifferent, as to leave her brethren at prayers and go to bed. But all at once screamed out, under a sense of her lost estate, and in less than fifteen minutes rejoiced in God her Saviour.” If this may not be called frantic enthusiasm, I do not know what deserves that name. There is likewise a class of Methodists in Wales called Jumpers, who, at the time of divine worship, have a custom to make loud groans, and to bawl out, “Glory to God!” leaping up and down in all manner of postures.

I have attended many times divine service in methodistical tabernacles, or meeting-houses, and I have listened to the harangues of those who preached in fields. As they are generally delivered without previous meditation and preparation, it may easily be guessed, that, as such sermons frequently last an hour, or sometimes longer, much confusion, prolixity, repetition, and nonsense, must be met with in them, particularly if the preacher, as is too often the case, happens to be an illiterate man. Much and very various matter, is in haste collected from all quarters;

Unus et alter

Affuitur pannus.

HOR.

Some

Some dogmatical tenets, some moral doctrines, some violent invectives against the manners of the times, some ludicrous and some marvellous stories, are kneaded together, not in the most elegant language, and thus laid, as bread of life, before the needy souls that attend. Among the favourite topics with which their discourses are filled from the beginning to the end, are the doctrines of original sin, of justification, and what they call the lost and undone state of man by nature, and the eternal damnation of those who are not of the elect, or of unrepenting sinners. When they treat of human nature, they blacken poor mortal man to such a degree, and describe him as such a monster of innate wickedness and depraved disposition, that a well-meaning man might ask, How it was possible that God could create such a race of miscreants? They degrade all human virtue, which, as they call it, is not the offspring of faith, so much, that a prudent person, when he finds himself in a crowd, whilst they preach, will take care of his pockets. But the greatest eloquence they display, when they speak of the punishment of sin and eternal damnation; when they bring, with great vociferation and gesticulation, the devil and hell nearer in sight of their audiences. Often have I heard them,

with

with great emotion, address their hearers with that emphatic phrase, " You will be damned ;" and it is singular, that the people should like those preachers best, who frequently, in an angry tone, announce everlasting damnation, and shew them hell-fire at no great distance, as if those could be called virtuous and praise-worthy people, who abstain from openly criminal actions, in consequence of being frightened from committing them by the sight of the gallows and of punishment. Whitefield, however, as one of the founders of the sect, was more addicted to this way of preaching than John Wesley, who, to his credit, endeavours more to persuade his hearers to be good, than to frighten them from doing evil.

Mr. Whitefield had a particular talent for preaching charity-sermons, and used to call himself, " The Lord's pick-pocket." Indeed, the collections which he has made, and the contributions he raised from his audiences, must have been very considerable, for had they not been such, he never would have been able to erect so many edifices of various kinds as he has done, or live and travel in the manner that he did. When he died in 1770, in America, leaving no family behind, he left by his will,



all that belonged to him, some legacies excepted, in the hands of two trustees, and he who survives, is to have the whole, the value of which is not known. Many wondered, why Mr. Whitefield made such a will; but it seems that he has not failed in what were supposed his intentions, for every thing relating to his sect is kept up, as if he were still alive; nay, perhaps, better. The money-collections are carried on as before, and what he wanted for his own support, which I presume was not inconsiderable, goes now to the fund, by which the buildings and the preachers are supported. I have even heard, that the latter are at present better paid than in Whitefield's time, who used to allow them but a small pittance. The antipathy, which subsisted formerly between the followers of Mr. Whitefield and those of Mr. Wesley, continues still, and neither of the parties seem much inclined to be nearly connected.

It is the custom among the Methodists, to interrupt their preacher during the sermons, with saying loudly, Amen, when they think that something affecting or striking has issued from the lips of the person that occupies the pulpit: Whitefield was particularly fond of  
this

this kind of applause; and a number of women receiving weekly alms, attend at the time of worship, where they are generally the foremost in singing this Amen. I have not been able to learn, whether the *Stichomantia*, or the consulting of the Bible, by opening it at random, and fixing the eye upon any verse that comes first in sight, to learn before hand the success of an undertaking, is still, as it was formerly, in use among the Methodists. Time, which produces alterations in all human things, does the same in superstitious customs; and, perhaps, this kind of oracular answers may be now in disuse. Whitefield was a great friend to the casting of the lot. Even in disputes, about speculative and theological points, when the parties as usual, could not agree, he used the lot as a means of arbitration, and would not permit any appeal from such a decision. This, indeed, is, in my opinion, the best and the easiest way to preserve unanimity; and I think it might not be amiss, in order to avoid unedifying controversy, and uncharitable disputes, to adopt sometimes this method of deciding doubtful matters, which cannot be settled with any certainty. For as such opinions have no connexion with truth, and do not promote human

happiness, reason, properly speaking, has nothing to do with them, and whoever attempts to apply it in such instances, may address himself in the words of Terence :

. . . . . Nihilo plus agas

*Quàm si des operam ut cum ratione infanias.*

It is a pity that Mr. Whitefield did not, by this good method, decide his disputes with Mr. Wesley, who, however, shewed great moderation, and bestowed many encomiums upon Mr. Whitefield, when, at his death, he preached his funeral sermon, which is printed.

There is more order and regulation among that party of Methodists which is on Mr. Wesley's side, than among those of Whitefield. The former keeps his great flock, which is dispersed over all England, under close inspection. In the principal towns, those who are of his sect are divided into societies, and these again into classes, which regularly meet every week more than once. They communicate to each other freely and plainly, as they call it, their spiritual affairs, and the true state of their souls. They send an account of the result of these meetings to their spiritual guide in the place where they live, who transmits afterwards their confessions to the chief society in London, where Mr. Wesley, if he be present, generally himself reads the dispatches which

which are received, without spectacles, though, at present, very near ninety years of age, being a myops. These classes, which hardly ever exceed twelve in number, receive likewise the charitable donations, which by their leader, as he is called, are transmitted weekly to Mr. Wesley's steward in London. The two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, published, so long ago as the year 1743, a small pamphlet, intitled, "The Nature, Design, and general Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle upon Tyne, &c." which contains very curious questions, to be proposed in these meetings.

From this it may be supposed, that the Wesleyan Methodists have introduced a rather severe discipline among themselves; and, indeed, Mr. Wesley keeps his missionaries or preachers, as well as their flocks, in very great order and subordination. All the chapels or preaching-houses in the country are connected with the grand tabernacle or chapel, in London, and are from thence provided with missionaries or preachers, who are obliged to transmit to London, from time to time, proper accounts of the state of their flocks, and the revenues of their preaching-houses or chapels. They receive their salaries not from their congregations, but

from the society in London. Mr. Wesley changes his missionaries in the country frequently, for fear, as it is said, that they should become too much beloved among their flocks, and make themselves independent of him.

The number of Methodists in England increases, and it was said some years ago, that they amounted to near eighty thousand. They are not only numerous in the church of England, but among the Dissenters also; That party which is connected with Mr. Wesley, and adopts the doctrine of universal redemption, is the strongest. The Whitefieldites have all those among the Dissenters who adopt Calvin's doctrine, and favour at the same time Methodism, on their side. Mr. Wesley and his followers maintain that strange doctrine of moral perfection, to which man, according to their opinion, may arrive in this life, much stronger than the Whitefieldites; but the imperfections, even of the great leaders of the sect themselves, have been so visible, as to make it quite unnecessary to refute an assertion which is contradicted by all experience, and is inconsistent with human nature.

Whether it be true, that both Mr. Whitefield and afterwards Mr. Wesley had an eye upon the American colonies, before they acquired

quired independence, to establish there bishopricks, and become themselves, under the authority of the British government, the first bishops, it is not in my power to determine. It was said, that when Mr. Whitefield went over to America in 1769, that he was supported by some bishops in England, and sent thither, as a popular clergyman to the Americans, to feel their pulse, in regard to an episcopal establishment; but dying there soon after, the matter is said to have dropped, and the design, if there was any, cannot be ascertained by the event. Mr. Wesley, during the late American war, shewed himself a strenuous advocate for the measures of the then ministry, and defended the measures which were adopted against the colonies in more than one small pamphlet. Nay, he went so far as to assume a prophetic character, and predicted the subjugation of the colonies; but the event has proved, that he is not endowed with the gift of prophecy. On account of his great forwardness in encouraging the subjugation of the colonies, it was alleged against him by his antagonists, that he aimed at a bishoprick, to be erected among the Americans after they had been subdued. This charge, however, cannot be proved; but I believe, that religious liberty would have been

in distress in America, if Mr. Wesley had obtained there a power in ecclesiastical affairs; for I confess, that I have no great confidence in the spirit of toleration among the Methodists.

What may be the fate of Methodism, it is not in my power, nor in that of any body else, to foretel. This, however, I believe, that after Mr. Wesley's death, the distinction between Whitefieldites and Wesleyans will gradually drop, and the sect of Methodists will not only continue, but even increase as long as there are people, who, in their way of worship, require something austere and which affects the senses; whilst, at the same time, they have a propensity towards enthusiasm. People of this stamp will never be wanting, particularly among the English; and the Methodists will grow more numerous if the carelessness and indifference, so visible among the episcopal clergy, instead of lessening, should rather increase.

I shall conclude this article, with mentioning a school, established, as I suppose, by Mr. Wesley, and his late brother, in Kingwood, near Bristol, for the education of youth. I have read an account of it<sup>s</sup>, by which it ap-

<sup>s</sup> A Short Account of the School in Kingwood, near Bristol. Bristol, 1768.

pears, in many respects, to be well calculated for the purpose, though three masters only can hardly be a sufficient number to give lessons in so many different things, to eight classes of boys, from very early in the morning till evening. The method which is proposed, at the end of this short account of the school, to those who design to go, within four years, through a course of academical learning, is rather singular; and in the collection of books which are recommended to be read by the young scholar, several should be left out and the rest be better arranged. Though not a word of an able instructor, or tutor, is mentioned to assist the young student, the account concludes very emphatically with these words, "Whoever carefully goes through this course, will be a better scholar than nine in ten of the graduates at Oxford or Cambridge." This may possibly be true. Lady Huntingdon, the great patroness of the late Mr. Whitefield, has instituted in London an academy for preparing young men as methodistical preachers; but, it is said, that it is not attended with any great success.

TOLE-



## T O L E R A T I O N .

**B**EFORE I proceed to speak particularly of the Dissenters, it will be proper to make some previous observations concerning the state of religious toleration in England.

After the Reformation, which took place under Henry VIII. and under queen Elizabeth, it was appointed by law that *one* church only, that which the government acknowledged, should be tolerated in the kingdom. By subsequent acts of parliament kings themselves were prescribed what religion to profess. All other sects were excluded, and that alone which was appointed by law, with its highly privileged clergy, was acknowledged as the *established church* \*. Against those who did not profess the established religion were very harsh laws

\* This privilege extends so far that the *parochial* churches alone bear the name of *Church* throughout England. The other religious buildings are called *Meeting-houses*, *Chapels*, *Preaching-houses*, &c.

enacted, by no means consonant with the doctrines of the founder of Christianity <sup>10</sup>.

It must be acknowledged by every one who has even but a moderate acquaintance with history, that the establishment of a predominant church, has frequently given rise to the greatest animosities in a country; and has been highly prejudicial to the peace and welfare of its inhabitants. To be convinced of this, let any one compare those nations where a general religious toleration, without restrictions, is allowed, with those where it is denied. It is possible, that at first the requisition of a strict uniformity in religious opinions was made to prevent contentions and quarrels; but whoever has any knowledge of the human heart, whoever is convinced of the right every man has to think for himself, though there are many who renounce it, whoever has remarked the impression which a superstitious education makes upon mankind, how it weakens the understanding, fosters holy pride and pious hatred; whoever attends to the great abuse, which many of those who call themselves mi-

<sup>10</sup> The laws that were made against the Dissenters from time to time, and the indulgences afterwards allowed them, may be found in BURN'S *Ecclesiastical Law*, vol. i. article *Dissenters*.

ministers of the true church frequently make of exclusive privileges which the law confers upon them, will readily acknowledge, that it would be much better for the community, if every man were permitted, without interruption, to serve God to the best of his knowledge. The love of virtue, rectitude, and justice, should be made the grand foundation of religion, excluding every thing that relates to mere opinion; and those alone should be deemed *heretics*, worthy of excommunication, who, by persisting, without any hopes of amendment, in those vices which invade the rights of society, disturb the public welfare, which cannot exist without that virtue, which both reason and inward feelings will prescribe.

That education which nature dictates, is simple and innocent; when, on the contrary, that which may be called artificial, is frequently the cause why false notions, which take their rise from assumed authorities, self-interest, folly, and other pernicious sources, are received as truths, and propagated as such with earnestness and warmth, and too often forced upon others by the most oppressive measures. As dogs and bears may be taught to dance, and game cocks be disciplined to the fight, thus  
may

may the human species be trained up by education in such a manner, that they shall, according to the doctrines proposed and impressed upon them in their infancy, knit their brows, place their bodies in certain attitudes, grin contempt upon those of different sentiments, threaten with their fists, and put their threats into execution ! Neither the benevolent Father of mankind, nor the nature he has given us, but perverse education alone, and pernicious habits, instigate men to the subversion of all peace and happiness, to oppose their antagonists in speculative opinions, not only by speech or by the pen, but by offensive weapons, even with fire and sword ! It is, therefore, the first and principal indication of a wise legislature, to take care that those whose heads and hearts are spoiled by education, should be taught the doctrines of moderation and of mutual indulgence ; that the warm and the choleric, who are so apt to foam at the merest trifles, should be kept at a secure distance from each other, or be separated by a superior force as often as they grapple together, to prevent their fury from becoming contagious, and to preserve public tranquillity ; and finally, that the principles of mutual benevolence, and of mutual

tual toleration, be inculcated upon the mind, from the earliest youth.

Immediately after the Reformation, religious toleration was, as I have before observed, in a very imperfect state. An ancient ecclesiastical law, *De Heretico comburendo*, was still in force, without even a suspicion being entertained that such a law was inhuman and impious, and without specifying what was to be understood by heresy, or who could be declared guilty of the charge. Henry VIII. declared opposition to the papal chair to be innocent, and at the same time enacted, through the medium of a servile parliament, that the doctrine of transubstantiation, communion by one element alone, the celibacy of the clergy, monastic vows, the mass, and auricular confession, should be retained as articles of faith. Those who denied transubstantiation were to be burnt for heretics; but whoever did not believe the five other articles, should simply be hanged as a felon. How humane and Christian-like this!

The glorious times of queen Elizabeth deserve no praise respecting religious toleration. The laws I have mentioned concerning the burning of heretics, which excited such horror  
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in the preceding reign of queen Mary, continued in force. Two unfortunate Baptists were condemned to death, and fell victims to blind and impious zeal. Queen Elizabeth made several other regulations which were not very consonant with the spirit of Christianity. It was, for instance, enacted, that every one who should speak or write disrespectfully of the ceremonies of the established church, particularly of the Common-prayer, should, for the *first* offence be imprisoned twelve months; and for the *second*, he should be sentenced to perpetual imprisonment.

Though some apology might be made for these punishments, on account of the bold and violent attacks made by the clergy at Geneva, and that of the Roman catholic persuasion, upon the new form introduced into the English church, yet at the bar of humanity, and of unbiassed reason, such laws will appear too severe. But this is generally the case when the party injured becomes an umpire in its own cause.

Under the wretched administration of James I. the law *De Heretico comburendo*, still remained in force. Two unfortunate men, who were called Arians, suffered death for their opinions in the ninth year of his reign. This offering

was

was thought due to the benevolent Creator of mankind, whose honour was supposed to be endangered by the opinions of men. And since this merciful Being did not treat such persons in the light of offenders, or visit them with judgments, those who called themselves professors of the orthodox faith, *laid their hands upon their brethren, and slew them*; by which they fully evinced, that they thought themselves better acquainted with the execution of vindictive justice than the God of heaven and earth!

In the licentious days of Charles II. the *Habeas Corpus* act was made, which secured the English from all arbitrary imprisonment; and by another act, which wrested the power of punishing heretics out of the secular arm, and consigned the supposed offender to church-censure, they were relieved from the horrors of religious persecution. But still several ancient laws of an oppressive nature continued unrepealed. A law still exists, which subjects to perpetual imprisonment, any one who should deny, or openly oppose, the doctrine of the Trinity. This law is not yet repealed, though it is never enforced. There is no nation in Christendom where Anti-trinitarians and Socinians abound more than in England, They teach, and publish their opinions in the most open

open manner, without molestation, as will more particularly appear hereafter: yet this freedom wears the aspect of mere connivance, and even the present century has furnished some examples where the secular power has been employed against those who had opposed the doctrines of the established church. Among other instances, Woolston died in the year 1737 in the King's-Bench prison, where he was committed on account of his treatise against the miracles, and also subjected to a fine of an hundred pounds. It is not thirty years since one Peter Annet was punished for a miserable attack on revealed religion. In the present day, authors of this class are free from molestation.

As many towards the close of the last century rather abused the liberty that was restored to them under king William, and propagated principles which were deemed to threaten the subversion of virtue and morality, an act was passed in parliament to check this apprehended evil<sup>1</sup>, by which it was ordained, that whoever had been brought up in the Christian religion, and had made a public profession of the same, and afterwards openly attacked the

<sup>1</sup> It was made in the 9th year of king William's reign and entitled, *An Act for the more effectual suppressing of blasphemy and profaneness.*



Bible, whether in print, or in conversation, for the *first* offence should, upon conviction, be declared incapable of holding any public-office ; for the *second* offence, he should be deprived of the privilege of pleading his cause in a court of judicature, of purchasing lands, and of becoming a guardian : he was, moreover, sentenced to suffer three years imprisonment. The following restriction was, however, subjoined ; if the offender became convinced of his error, and made an open recantation of it, in some court of judicature, he should be declared exempted from all the above punishments.

The present age is certainly the most happy and the most favourable to the cause of humanity. In the year 1779, some of the most severe laws, which had been enacted against the Dissenters, were repealed. Before this period, the dissenting clergy were required by law, to subscribe all the articles of the established church, those concerning church-government and baptism only excepted, before they were qualified for teaching ; but now they are free from any obligation to do this, and are simply required to make a general declaration to the following purpose, “ I receive the Scriptures  
“ of the Old and New Testament, as contain-  
“ ing

ing a revelation of the mind and will of  
 "God, and I receive it as the rule of my  
 "faith and practice." Though this declaration is so general, yet some of the dissenting clergy are not satisfied with it, conceiving, that making even such a declaration is an acknowledgment of the right of the civil magistrate to interfere in matters of religion, which they contend is no part of his province. But the generality were of opinion, that, as the declaration contained nothing but what they all believed, such a submission to the power of government could not be criminal, and they very justly thought that the act, passed in 1779, was too great an augmentation of religious liberty to be refused; though they were likewise of opinion that religion was not the province of the civil magistrate.

The Dissenters were formerly, under a very severe penalty, to register all their places for the instruction of youth; nor was any one permitted to keep a school without taking out a licence: this, with many other harsh and unreasonable laws, is now repealed. They are, however, excluded from all offices under government, though they may sit as members, either of the house of peers, or the house of commons. By the test act, which was passed in 1672, it was  
 Z 2                      enacted,

enacted, that all persons who were admitted into any office under the crown, should publicly receive the sacrament on a Sunday in the episcopal church, and be furnished with a certificate of the same from the clergyman and the churchwardens. Though by this the Catholics were particularly aimed at, yet it was extended to the Dissenters also. Before this act another had been passed in 1661, called the Corporation-act, which is still in force, and by which it was enacted, that no persons should be elected as magistrates or officers in any cities or corporations, who had not received the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England, within one year before such election.

There are sometimes Presbyterians who will not scruple to qualify themselves for offices, but I believe their number is not great. Burdensome, and unprofitable parish-offices, the Dissenters are not only permitted, but even compelled to serve when elected to them. The troublesome duty of a church-warden falls upon every parishioner in rotation, who is obliged to serve two years, under a penalty of fifteen pounds, payable to the parish. Many prefer paying this fine. I know, however, an instance, in which a Jew was elected to the office

fice of church-warden, in the parish in which he was a house-keeper, merely for the purpose of drawing the fine from him ; but he deceived the electors by accepting of this new employment, and with his Christian brother-church-warden, attended regularly the duties of his office.

In reality, the established clergy possess every thing which they can reasonably desire. England, as I have already observed, is divided into a certain number of dioceses, and each diocese is again subdivided into its respective parishes. The lands of the Dissenters are indispensably subjected to pay the tithes to the established clergy, and every house in the parish, whether it be inhabited by Presbyterian, Quaker, or Jew, must pay the clergyman's dues and the church-rates. The dissenting minister himself, resident in the parish, as well as the other Dissenters, must pay his guinea, or any other sum, according as his house is rated, to the parish officers, when they go about to collect the rector's or the vicar's dues. Should he refuse, the adage *Clericus clericum non decimat* will not avail him ; a seizure is made of his effects to the amount of the sum ; nor are any laws put into execution with greater rigour in England than those which regard the claims

of the church, or the crown. It is true, the Dissenters are not compelled, in the present age, as they were in the time of queen Elizabeth, to frequent their parish-church on a Sunday ; it is true, that the Dissenters of every denomination have liberty to build places of public worship, in every parish, where they please ; but then must pay dearly for it. The meeting-houses of Dissenters, which are built within the precincts of a parish-church, are considered as common buildings, and must pay taxes in the same manner as dwelling or other houses. They are exempted from the window-tax alone ; but this is also exacted whenever a bed-chamber belongs to a chapel, or when they are built over warehouses or cellars, which are let out, to temporal uses. That the meeting-houses have neither bells or steeples, I need not mention. The dissenting ministers may baptize, and bury in their own grounds, but they must not marry. This ceremony must be performed in the parish-church, and by the episcopal clergy alone. As the clergyman of the parish will generally refuse to register in the church-books, the children that are not baptised according to the rites of his church, though certificates of baptism are frequently demanded in cases of inheritance, and  
some-

sometimes to be produced by the poor who seek to be assisted or supported by the parish in which they were born; the residentiary librarian of the public library in Redcross-street, belonging to the Dissenters, keeps a register of births and baptisms, where every parent may have the name of his child inserted, on paying six pence to the librarian. It was with difficulty that the Dissenters obtained an act of parliament, by which a certificate produced from the above register, should be as valid in law, as those given by the parochial clergy.

Whoever imagines that reformation, or religious liberty, can proceed either from the head or the heart of the majority of the ruling church, believes what every fact upon record in church history has uniformly contradicted. All assemblies of divines of opposite parties, in order to bring about a reconciliation, and to restore peace and harmony, have not had the effect which was intended. Though I never have been in any part of my life, nor ever shall be, an advocate of despotism, or of religious compulsion, yet I am convinced, that in contests about mere opinions, I speak not either of religion or the principles of morality, the authority of the prince or the magistrate often proves the

[most effectual means to quench religious animosities, for the maintenance of public tranquillity. The late emperor Joseph has accomplished, in a few years, more in regard to religious toleration than all assemblies or councils of the clergy could have effected, had they sat in holy convocation an hundred years together! Who could have dreamed, twenty years ago, that a spirit of toleration, so honourable to nature and religion, would have been diffused in so short of space, over all those countries, to which these regulations extended! Where is religious tolerance and mutual forbearance, protected by the wisdom of the king, so generally diffused as in the Prussian dominions? In what country of Europe, comparatively speaking, is a greater number of learned and moderate divines to be found, than in the realms of this great monarch? In his dominions no one church is exclusively the predominant one; and, consequently, toleration cannot, properly speaking, be said to extend itself to any one in particular. No one church considers it as an instance of condescension, and of meritorious forbearance, to live in amity with an-

\* This was written when Frederic the Great was still alive. The times have since greatly altered, and things wear a different aspect at present.

other,

other, as is the case in England, and in many other countries. In fact, a toleration which restrains a more potent sect from persecuting, enfeebling, and oppressing a weaker, ought not to exist and to have a name among Christians. The spirit of their religion should be, according to the intention of its founder, reciprocal love and charity. Since the first establishment of Christianity, a fairer opportunity has not presented itself, for the complete introduction of religious liberty, and for solving the question, Whether government cannot subsist without granting exclusive privileges to any church in particular? than that which the liberated states of America now enjoy. Time will shew, whether they make the proper use of this opportunity, and what will, in the process of years, be the result.

In the mean while, since, in the present state of things, as so many sects are existing, toleration may be considered in the light of a necessary evil, by which greater evils are prevented, it must be confessed, that the toleration enjoyed in England, is preferable to that of any other country, the American states excepted, as it is more general, and, whilst it comprehends every sect, stands upon a surer basis, and there-



therefore cannot be endangered or disturbed by chicanery, or abolished by despotism. Though there be an appearance as if the episcopal church knew of no Dissenters in its parishes, and that the creed, in regard to the parochial taxes and tithes, must be absolutely adopted by every parishioner without any distinction; yet, thank heaven, there is no compulsion, in any other article, and conformity is not forcibly exacted, except in that which respects the pecuniary claims of the church. Every one may think, speak, and write, as he pleases. The act of toleration protects each religious community and place of public worship. Every sect may, in the most open manner, and without fear of molestation, worship God according to its own rites; under no other restriction than that the worship must be in public with open doors; and that free admission must be given to every one who conducts himself with decency. Every congregation of sectaries may build a place of worship, when and where they please, or hire a room for such a purpose, which is to be licensed at the quarter-sessions, which licence the magistrates may be compelled to grant. By such regulations, peace and harmony are preserved, and every species of persecution

cution suppressed. Each sect publish their sentiments with freedom, and in their own way, and without alarming others. The zeal to propagate opinions decreases daily, and no body stares at another with astonishment, because he thinks differently from himself. Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents, Sabbatarians, Socinians, Arminians, Deists, Quakers, Jews; in short, every denomination follow their respective occupations near and with each other. They live together as neighbours, shake hands as friends, conclude commercial bargains, without the least concern about each others religious sentiments, without harbouring a thought, that the man who does not frequent the episcopal church, may not be as good a member of society, and as upright, as he who uses the Common-Prayer, and repeats the Athanasian Creed after a man in a white surplice. All sects meet at the Exchange, and at places of public diversion. In each place the influence of toleration is very conspicuous. The theatre in particular is a public evidence of a patient and of a tolerant spirit, Comus points his wit at the follies of each sect indiscriminately; and laughter-loving Satire smiles with impunity at peculiarities of the episcopal clergy, as well

as at those of the Puritan, Methodist, Baptist, or any other sectary. Men of every persuasion enjoy the joke alike, and join in the good-natured laugh, except those who are satirized and must say to themselves, *de te fabula narratur.*

## OF THE DISSENTERS IN GENERAL.

**U**NDER the general denomination of Dissenters is comprehended every religious sect in England, that does not conform to the episcopal church. They were called Nonconformists, as they refused conformity to the established church; but this name, as well as that of Recusants, (which was given them upon their refusing to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles), is commonly changed for the general appellation of Dissenters. They are farther distinguished by the name of Protestant Dissenters, from those who, though they are Nonconformists, are not Protestants, and are yet termed Dissenters by the episcopal church; such as the Roman Catholics, Quakers, Jews, Mahometans. Arians, Arminians, Socinians, Unitarians, Methodists, Deists, do not form themselves into distinct sects; they are fostered in the episcopal church itself as well as among the different classes of sectaries,

### 350 OF THE DISSENTERS

so that they cannot, strictly speaking, be considered as belonging to the Dissenters.

The number of Dissenters in England is said to diminish. Daniel Neal calculated that in his time there were about 150,000 dissenting families in England ; but I believe that at present they hardly amount to 100,000. We may estimate the number of their meeting-houses, in and near London, within the bills of mortality, at not more than perhaps an hundred ; and of these the majority are very small, and many are upon the decline. Several dissenting ministers of whom I have enquired what might be the proportion between the Non-conformists of every class and those of the establishment, account them as one to five. Many are the causes of this decline of the dissenting interest, and the following may be considered as some of the principal. It is a fact clearly established by history, that zeal for opinions becomes in course of time more moderate, if its warmth be not kept up by opposition. The posterity of those who have been severely persecuted for sentiments which they most strenuously maintained, will not scruple, after the lapse of three or four generations, when the fury of persecution and of opposition is abated, to exchange the creed  
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of their ancestors, if it be not deeply impressed by education, and enforced as of the utmost moment, for other sentiments which are better calculated to advance their temporal interests. Honours, distinctions, and wealth, have too much influence over frail mortals. Indifference about religion, and licentiousness of manners, prevail more and more ; and it is no subject of surprize, that men forsake that sect in which they have been born and educated, and profess sentiments more favourable to honour, promotion, riches, and worldly grandeur. Even parents, who mind only the temporal welfare of their children, will give them an education which prepares them for conformity. In later times several, who left the Dissenters, have been promoted to the dignity of bishops and archbishops ; and some who have renounced the principles of Puritanism, have enjoyed the most honourable and lucrative posts in the state. This must, doubtless, make a deep impression upon the mind, and encourage imitation. Besides, the Dissenters in general, and many of their clergy in particular, have thrown off much of that stiffness and zeal which distinguished their ancestors. They begin to imitate the general manners, and to conform to  
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the prevailing sentiments of the present age ; which is likewise a very potent cause of their decline. Other causes will be occasionally assigned, when I treat of particular sects among them.

It must not be expected of me to trace the origin, and write a regular history of the Dissenters in England : this is not my object. I mean only to describe their present state. Nor is this so easy a task as many may be apt to imagine. Though I am acquainted with several learned and well-informed persons in this country, and particularly among the Dissenters, yet I have been obliged, in several instances, to apply for information to more than one, before I could obtain it ; nor has it always been full and satisfactory. Mosheim<sup>3</sup> has

<sup>3</sup> Summa ceteram Angli quum licentia fruuntur libere cogitata sua proferendi, et Deum ita colendi, uti justum cuique videtur; fieri haud aliter potest, quin variae passim sectae oriantur et controversiae de rebus ad religionem pertinentibus nunquam cessent. De his vero tam sectis quam litibus nemo facile sic egerit, ut desiderari nihil queat, nisi aliquamdiu ipse inter Anglos vixerit, & in fortunatae gentis opiniones, jura, leges, factiones praesens inquisiverit. Sectarum plerarumque ne nomina quidem ad nos perferuntur: multarum notitiam habemus qualemcunque, sed parum absolutam & luculentam. MOSHEMII *Institut. Hist. Eccles.* p. 1032.

taken

taken notice of this difficulty, and I have experienced it much more than he has. Fanatics arise from time to time, and may obtain a number of ignorant followers without their being formed into a sect. Their fantastic notions cease to be novel; their propagator and his profelytes die away; and all is buried in oblivion: so that Mosheim well observes, that the names of many of these sects are unknown with us in Germany, and that the knowledge of most of them is superficial and obscure. Nay, many even here, are ignorant of the names of several of the sects, which have strongly attracted the attention of the Germans. They and their opinions leave the world together, and it requires much pains to collect authentic information concerning them; particularly in a country where the learned themselves entertain but little curiosity concerning this subject.\* New sentiments in religion, and the diversity of opinions relative to them, do not in the present age attract much notice, and people in general give themselves but little trouble to enquire about either the one or the other. Dr. Priestley† observes, in one of his

\* A View of the Principles and Conduct of the Protestant Dissenters, &c. Preface, p. 6.



late publications concerning the Dissenters, "that if his treatise should have no other merit, it would, at least, have that of a book of travels, written to inform people of the manners and customs of those to whom they were strangers." These strangers whom he means to inform are his own countrymen of the episcopal or established church. He says farther, "We sometimes meet with instances, even in genteel life, and among persons of a liberal education, of such absolute ignorance of the Dissenters, and of their principles, as afford us great diversion." In my enquiries about religious sects, I have very frequently been silenced where I expected satisfactory replies, by being answered, *Indeed, sir, I cannot tell; I know hardly any thing about it.* Yet many persons in Germany, who think themselves perfectly well acquainted with English affairs, entertain the opinion, that it is the most easy thing in the world to get minute information about all these matters. Many sects publish nothing about themselves, and if sometimes such publications exist, they either are little known, or are by all-devouring time, become so scarce that, when they are not to be met with in public libraries, they may be enquired after

after at half the old book-shops and stalls in London, without being procured. On making enquiries by members of the different sects themselves, about their tenets, their present state, and their opinions, I have found them frequently shy and reserved.

## OF THE PRESBYTERIANS.

**T**HE English Presbyterians of the present age, are carefully to be distinguished from the Scottish. The former have, in a great measure, forsaken the opinions and the manners of the Puritans in the last century, while the latter retain them in a considerable degree.

The chief articles in which they dissent from the episcopal church, are, according to the statement of Dr. Priestley's, the following: First, they disclaim all human authority in matters of religion; they believe that the whole of their religion is contained in the New Testament; and that it is every man's personal concern to learn his faith and duty from thence, by the diligent use of his own faculties. Secondly, they are offended at the hierarchy. Christ and his immediate followers, they allege, were unacquainted with it. Titles, dignities, rank, large incomes, pluralities, and

's View of the Principles and Conduct of the Protestant Dissenters, p. 7, &c.

such

such things, are, as they apprehend, essentially contrary to the genius of the religion of Christ, and fatal to Christian humility. They, therefore, are against distinctions of honour among the ministers of the gospel. Thirdly, they are displeased with the garb of the episcopal church, which they consider as one of the remains of popery; they reject many of its ceremonies, which they look upon as superstitious, and think them a disgrace, as Dr. Priestley expresses himself, to the good sense and understanding of Englishmen to retain them. In the foregoing things he believes the generality of the Dissenters are agreed; but he adds, "that though the greater part of those who dissent from the established church still maintain the same general doctrines; others of them, whose number is increasing, and who are the most distinguished for learning and freedom of enquiry, are persuaded of the falsity of the following doctrines, which the founders of the English establishment deemed to be the most fundamental: the doctrine of the Trinity, the sentence of everlasting damnation, as expressed in the Athanasian creed; the addressing prayers to Christ; the doctrine of original sin, and that of absolute predestination." Thus the doctor describes

the difference between the Dissenters and the established church, adding at the same time, "the most learned and respectable members of the church of England have been foremost in their labours to explode the Thirty-nine articles; and a great majority of those who are candid and inquisitive among them, believe as little of what are generally called the orthodox opinions as we do."

The religious sentiments of the dissenting clergy are very different. A few think like Dr. Priestley, many are Arminians, some Arians, others Socinians, or Anti-trinitarians, and not a few zealous sticklers for Calvinism. Every one has a right to think as he pleases, and nobody assumes an authority over another to controul him, or to be his judge in matters of faith. Whilst, however, this liberality of sentiment spreads itself among the Dissenters, and old prejudices wear off, the more indifference in regard to the religious tenets of their forefathers must increase, and consequently, the interest of the Dissenters, as a sect, decrease. Many of the laity among them become more accommodating; they consider conformity to the church as a trifle, and do not scruple to educate their children in the principles of the establishment, in order to secure, as they imagine,

gine, a happier lot for them in this world; this goes sometimes so far, that whole families forsake the Dissenters. There is no doubt, but that if, on the contrary, the Presbyterians were the predominant church, their numbers would increase, in the same proportion as the episcopalians do now.

The stiff, formal character of the Puritans, which prevailed even in the beginning of the present century, and which every man of sense must view with an eye of compassion, if not with contempt, was, perhaps, better adapted to keep up the interest of the sect. A modern dissenting minister<sup>6</sup>, draws their character in the following manner: "The diligent and impartial enquirer, however candid, must acknowledge that the Protestant Dissenters, in less time than even half a century past, were in general austere in their temper and manners; that they painted religion with a gloomy aspect; betrayed a spirit of singularity and opposition in trifles; were excessive and almost indiscriminate in their invectives against pleasure; laid too much stress upon modes and opinions, made too little

<sup>6</sup> On Religious Zeal, with a comparative View of the Protestant Dissenters of the last and present Age. By Richard Godwin. *Three Discourses*, London, 1780. 8vo.

"allowance for human infirmities; fixed too  
 "high a value on long and frequent retire-  
 "ments for the sake of devotional exercises in  
 "private; placed as much too low the standard  
 "of moral virtues, those especially which are  
 "humane, generous, and of all others the most  
 "engaging; confined almost all their appro-  
 "bation and good-will to the people of their  
 "own sect; discovered an over-weening con-  
 "ceit of their own spiritual attainments; and,  
 "what is still worse than all the rest, that there  
 "were undoubtedly instances of those who put  
 "on the semblance of rigorous piety to atone  
 "for, conceal, and give success to heinous  
 "immorality. It is with all readiness acknow-  
 "ledged, that there are upon record many ex-  
 "ceptions to this heavy charge, but the above  
 "mentioned may, I think, be exhibited as  
 "some of the principal outlines in the charac-  
 "ter of those who were, or affected to be,  
 "amongst the best and most religious per-  
 "sons of the last age. Nay, farther, if a  
 "diligent and impartial enquiry were now  
 "made into the prevailing temper of large bo-  
 "dies of Protestant Dissenters, in several dif-  
 "ferent parts of the kingdom, it would be  
 "found that something of the same spirit is  
 "still remaining among us." And now, to  
 make

make the contrast between the old and modern Dissenters, appear the more striking, I will add immediately another picture of the latter, drawn by Dr. Priestley, who is of great respectability among the Dissenters, and describes those of the present age, in the following manner : “ The present race of Dissenters,” says he, “ have little, or nothing of that stiffness “ and rusticity of behaviour, for which their ancestors are generally, though not altogether “ justly, supposed to have been distinguished. “ With a moderate share of wealth, they are “ by no means deficient in the politeness of “ modern times ; and we apprehend that “ their ministers, though, in general, inferior “ to the clergy of the established church in “ classical knowledge, are not inferior to them “ in philosophical knowledge, and are probably, “ superior to them with respect to theology “ and an acquaintance with the Scriptures. “ This is owing chiefly to the circumstance of “ our being the inferior party, and the necessity that, in this situation, we are under to “ distinguish ourselves, in order that, without “ the advantage of numbers, we may appear “ in a respectable light in the community. “ Besides, it may be well supposed, that all the “ unthinking part of the nation, will in general



"ral go with the establishment, whatever it be;  
 "No body is ever asked a reason why he goes  
 "to church. Any person would be thought  
 "impertinent who should seem to expect a rea-  
 "son in this case. The members of the esta-  
 "blished church, therefore, have no occasion  
 "to trouble themselves about the reasons of  
 "their conduct; but Dissenters are often in the  
 "way of discourses upon that subject, so that  
 "they cannot help giving some degree of at-  
 "tention to it, and also to every other subject  
 "of controversy. Children and young persons  
 "among us are exposed to the insults of their  
 "companions who go to church; which rouses  
 "their faculties, and puts them upon an en-  
 "quiry, that they may have something to re-  
 "ply, when they are attacked upon the subject  
 "of religion. In this situation, our youth  
 "can hardly help getting a taste for reading.  
 "And I think it is evidently fact, that Dissent-  
 "ers in general are not possessed of less know-  
 "ledge than churchmen of the same class and  
 "rank in life; it is rather probable, that they  
 "are possessed of more. Dissenting ministers  
 "are much more carefully educated than the  
 "generality of clergymen. And not only are  
 "they obliged to study the subject of religion  
 "more closely; but, if the constitution of our  
 "semi-

“ seminaries of learning he attended to, it will  
 “ appear that the business of education, in  
 “ respect to those who are designed for the mi-  
 “ nistry, is much more extensive and liberal  
 “ among us. The method in which clergy-  
 “ men are educated at the English universities,  
 “ is certainly less adapted to make them di-  
 “ vines than the discipline and course of study,  
 “ provided for Dissenters; besides that many  
 “ of our students, after attending the usual  
 “ time at our English academies, finish their  
 “ studies at Edinburgh or Glasgow, Dissent-  
 “ ing ministers, are also, in a manner, obliged  
 “ to use their own prayers, and to make their  
 “ own sermons; which makes reading, think-  
 “ ing, and composing, necessary and habitual  
 “ to them; whereas it is very possible for a  
 “ clergyman to go through his duty without  
 “ particular observation or censure, if he can  
 “ do little more than read, and be able to ac-  
 “ quit himself with tolerable propriety in com-  
 “ mon conversation. Besides, dissenting mi-  
 “ nisters are under much more restraint with  
 “ respect to decency and strictness of behaviour.  
 “ Levities, that are hardly noticed in clergy-  
 “ men, would be the cause of expulsion to  
 “ many dissenting ministers. In this situation  
 “ not being at liberty to indulge themselves  
 “ in

" in the fashionable pleasures and dissipation of  
 " the age, they are under a necessity of hav-  
 " ing recourse to reading and study. In this  
 " manner a considerable number of them, a  
 " number much greater in proportion than of  
 " the clergy, acquire a habit of severe applica-  
 " tion to study, so as to have no taste for any  
 " other method of spending their time. A set of  
 " men, thus formed by their education and  
 " manner of life, cannot but be of service to  
 " the community, especially with respect to the  
 " clergy, and the state of literature in general.  
 " It must be owned, however, that the mode-  
 " ration of the present age has occasioned a  
 " very great change in the manners and pecu-  
 " liar distinctions of the Dissenters. As the  
 " politeness of the times prevents all well-bred  
 " people from offending one another, by intro-  
 " ducing any conversation upon topics, on  
 " which they differ, the present race of Dis-  
 " senters are by no means so well versed, as  
 " their ancestors were, in the grounds of Non-  
 " conformity; and with respect to reading and  
 " knowledge of every kind, they are sinking  
 " fast to a level with the members of the esta-  
 " blished church. The consequence of a free  
 " and easy intercourse between Dissenters and  
 " churchmen is likely to prove much more fa-  
 " tal

" tal to the dissenting interest, than all the per-  
 " secution they underwent in former times.  
 " The decrease of bigotry has been attended  
 " with the decrease of just zeal. The rational  
 " Dissenters, being more free from bigotry,  
 " have, in general, the least zeal; and though  
 " it be evident, that they have the most reason  
 " to dissent from the church of England, yet  
 " they attend to these reasons so very little,  
 " that they have hardly any weight on their  
 " minds, or any influence on their conduct, so  
 " that, in many cases, the most trifling induce-  
 " ments in the world are sufficient to carry  
 " them into the church. But those who act in  
 " this manner are, evidently, persons with  
 " whom religious motives in general have little  
 " weight; so that their leaving us, is only a  
 " loss of numbers and wealth, and by no means  
 " of just reputation. Dissenting ministers, also,  
 " and especially those of the rational part of  
 " them, have lost almost all their preciseness  
 " and strictness of behaviour, and are hardly  
 " to be distinguished from the more decent  
 " clergymen. Still, however, nothing ap-  
 " proaching to immorality would be allowed in  
 " them; and with respect both to polite lit-  
 " erature and all the branches of useful science  
 " as well as theological knowledge, they have  
 " greatly

" greatly the advantage of their ancestors, and  
 " of the Dissenters of the other persuasion;  
 " and they are distinguishing themselves more  
 " every day. Yet, in consequence of mixing  
 " more with the world at large, dissenting mi-  
 " nisters of this stamp often come to lay but  
 " little stress on the peculiar principles of Non-  
 " conformity; and the few that are tempted  
 " with the prospect of advancing themselves,  
 " to conform to the established church, are  
 " almost entirely of this class; but as it is not  
 " pretended, that their opinions in matters of  
 " religion are changed, no person can be at a  
 " loss what kind of conformity it must have  
 " been. It is the reputation of the men, and  
 " not that of the cause, that is brought into  
 " question by those conversions?"

Here we have a portrait of old and modern  
 English Dissenters, drawn by two of their own  
 clergy; and I have given this long quotation  
 from Dr. Priestley for two reasons; first, be-  
 cause he may be supposed to enjoy the best  
 opportunity of being acquainted with the cha-  
 racter of his brethren, and to possess both pe-  
 netration and liberality sufficient to delineate  
 a faithful resemblance; and, secondly, because  
 he contrasts the established church, and parti-

7 View of the Principles and Conduct of the Protestant  
 Dissenters, &c. p. 82, &c.

cularly

cularly their clergy, with that of the Dissenters and their clergy, giving a comparative view of both; and what he has here advanced, appears to me to be well founded.

Public worship among the Dissenters is performed without shew. Their meeting-houses have neither images, nor altars, nor organs, nor steeples, nor bells. They have externally no church-like appearance, nor do their ministers wear any particular dress, except that they are commonly dressed in black, and when they officiate generally wear bands, and some of them gowns. They sing psalms, and in some congregations hymns, of which the singing of the latter is by far more melodious than the former. The prayers of the ministers in the pulpit are very long before, and rather shorter after the sermon. They last often a quarter of an hour, and are frequently very tiresome, because they are generally full of repetitions, and oftentimes delivered in a melancholy monotony. Their discourses are very different from those which were preached by the Presbyterians in the last century; and even in Scotland the style of preaching has changed much for the better. There are, however, some scattered instances in England of dissenting ministers, who still follow the ancient mode, and whose sermons are a rhapsody of mysteries, allegories, and unprofitable

fitable controversy. These are principally to be found among those who are somewhat methodistically inclined, and who, being deficient in a regular education, are excluded from the stated assemblies of the presbyterian clergy. Most of the dissenting ministers read their sermons, but not so literally as to have their eyes immoveably fixed upon their notes. The methodistical class, on the contrary, bawl away for hours together, without either notes or premeditation. I have heard many discourses of dissenting ministers, that may be considered as models for pulpit compositions. Some young ministers among them, from their dress and manners, might be mistaken for French abbés, and sometimes their pulpit eloquence is in the same character. Their manners, however, are perfectly agreeable to the younger sort of their audiences of both sexes, who move and dress in a much gayer style than their zealous progenitors.

A minister is seldom ordained among the Presbyterians; or, indeed, among the Dissenters in general, unless he be called to some particular congregation. Yet, young men, furnished with proper certificates of their abilities and moral conduct, are permitted to preach to any congregation, at the request of their minister,

minister; as soon as they leave the academy. Five or six clergymen are generally appointed to conduct an ordination. One of them preaches an introductory sermon; another gives the charge to the young minister; but without assuming himself any authority; merely advising him as a friend or brother. The other ministers engage in prayer. Sometimes the ceremony is accompanied with imposition of hands; sometimes it is omitted. The candidate is generally asked, what his reasons and motives are for taking upon himself the office of a minister; these he answers, and adds, sometimes, a summary view of his religious sentiments. This, however, is left entirely to his own discretion, and many content themselves with a general declaration that they are Christians.

The incomes of dissenting ministers are but small; and if a congregation affords for the maintenance of its pastor an hundred and fifty, or two hundred pounds, it is thought to be a very good place. Yet many of the dissenting clergy live with a very small income, often more comfortably, and with more decency, than some of the established church with two or three livings. The stipend of dissenting ministers is sometimes precarious; it depends on the largeness, opulence, and ge-



nerosity of their congregations ; and if it should happen, that the congregation decays, or leaves their pastor, his place and his ministerial function are at an end ; for the contributions for his support are not collected by coercion of the law, as those of the parish-priest, but depend on the liberality, attachment, and good-will of his congregation. There is a fund from which those ministers, whose salary is not sufficient for their support, receive small donations ; but I have reason to think, that it is not very ample. The congregation in Crutched-friars, which was once so respectable, and had Dr. Lardner and Dr. Benson, two celebrated divines, for its pastors, exists no more, the members dying off, or going to other congregations. The present principal Presbyterian congregations and meeting-houses in London, are those in Salter's-hall, in the Old-Jewry, in Carter-lane, and one in Princes-street, Westminster, which, at present, has the worthy and learned Dr. Kippis for its pastor.

Presbyterian congregations are entirely independent of each other. Every one of them has, exclusive of the minister, its elders, or deacons ; but they have no general president or head. Each community superintends its own affairs, and neither the people nor the minister

minister are subject to any consistory. It is true, that the most considerable ministers among the Dissenters in London, whether they be Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists, hold annual meetings, or oftener, if urgent business, relative to the general welfare of the dissenting interest, should require it; but this assembly never interferes with the concerns of particular congregations, or their preacher. From this assembly, or, if I may term it so, this synod, those ministers are excluded, who either are deficient in learning and education, or known to be Methodists. Those who belong to it call themselves collectively, *The general Body of Protestant Dissenting Ministers of London.*

Experience has convinced me, that the Presbyterian clergy, though those of the established church think them to be reserved and austere, are more easy of access, and more friendly in their manners, than most of the episcopalians. I know among the latter clergy, the most deserving, well-bred, and affable men; but the generality, at least of those who are in possession of church benefices, shew a kind of hauteur, founded merely upon the supposed security of their prerogatives and emoluments, as they are established by law. The dissenting clergy, on the contrary, consider themselves as

an oppressed part of the state, and seem to resent the haughty spirit of the former. This may be one reason, why they manifest less national pride in their conversation with strangers. Their sentiments relative to the affairs of church and state, are much freer than those of the episcopal church, whose hierarchy is so intimately connected with the civil government; for which reason they judge much more mildly of the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, which every liberal-minded Englishman regards as a most detestable doctrine. Most Dissenters are partial to republican principles, or at least to those of liberty; and the late revolution in North-America is a proof, how strongly the present generation of the Anglo-Americans has adhered to the tenets and spirit of republicanism, to which their forefathers were so much addicted.

The Presbyterians and other Dissenters have established, in different parts of England, academies for the education of youth; particularly those who are intended for the ministry. These dissenting academies are in a very different state from those in foreign countries, which are distinguished by the same name. They have no permanency, but flourish and die away within the space of a few years, as  
must

must be the case with all institutions that have no permanent fund. The most considerable academical institution, at present subsisting among the Dissenters, was founded in 1786, at Hackney, and is generally known by the name of the New College, Hackney. Large sums have been expended upon the building, which is spacious and has convenient grounds. A fund has been raised for its support, by voluntary subscription; and by means of this fund a limited number of young persons are supported and educated for some years, on an establishment. Other young men, who are not upon the foundation, are likewise admitted into these seminaries, and educated with the rest, at the expence of their parents. The academy at Hackney supports a number of students, and they remain there about five years, generally from the age of seventeen to two and twenty. It has at present seven tutors, in the different branches of literature and science. At Warrington, in Lancashire, was lately an academy established upon a very liberal plan; but it is, like many others, dissolved, though some time after re-established at Manchester. Formerly, it was not uncommon for English presbyterian students, when they had quitted their academies, to go to Scotch universities, to finish their stu-

dies, and sometimes to foreign Protestant universities; but this now happens less frequently. I have known young men, educated in these academies, who, after they had left them, and even had preached as divines, quitted their theological profession, and studied physick at Leyden or Edinburgh.

The Presbyterians have a kind of public library in Red-cross-street, in London, which was founded by Dr. Daniel Williams, an opulent Presbyterian clergyman. Of this library a catalogue was published in 1727. Some donations of books have since been added to it; but there being no particular fund appropriated to the purchase of new books, it has not been much enlarged. The library is placed in a spacious house erected for the purpose, where there is also a large room, in which the dissenting clergy hold their annual and occasional meetings.

## THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

SCOTLAND being the true seat of Presbyterianism, I give it a place here immediately, though the Scotch church cannot be classed among the *English* Dissenters, it being by law, in that kingdom, the established church. In the same manner as the Episcopalians in England call the Presbyterians Dissenters, so on the contrary, the same denomination is given to them in Scotland; for the orthodoxy of the inhabitants of a Christian country depends always on the education which they have received from the clergy of the established religion, which looks upon its adopted articles of faith, as a deed by which its income and temporalities are secured. It is, therefore, very natural that they should proclaim these articles as very sacred, and stigmatize those with denominations to which an idea of degradation is annexed, who dissent from them; particularly if by these means they can keep them at a distance, so as not to partake of the emoluments of church and state, which are so eagerly sought for.

Before Presbyterianism gained the ascendancy in Scotland, it was divided into two archbishopsricks, and twelve bishopsricks. The non-juring clergy in Scotland, who are of the episcopal church, still keep up among themselves the denomination and empty titles of these formerly existing bishopsricks, and even now an episcopal college exists in that country, consisting of six members, who style themselves bishops of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dumblane, &c.

All Scotland, with the adjacent islands, is divided into eight hundred and ninety parishes, each having its own minister: for pluralities and non-residence are not permitted in that country, the law having wisely provided against them. Most of the parishes are under a patron, and there are but few where the right of presentation is centered in the parishioners. This gave, a few years ago, occasion to some disturbances, the people attempting to extend their privileges, in which, however, they did not succeed. A considerable number of parishes belongs to the king, and are, therefore, termed royal boroughs. The patron is to appoint a clergyman to a vacant church, within six months; and if he fails in doing it, the presbytery nominates a minister in his stead; yet this does not extend over the royal boroughs,

roughs, for the king is not confined to any limited time.

The parishes are divided into sixty-nine presbyteries, which are formed by twelve, eighteen, and sometimes twenty-four of the neighbouring parishes. The minister or presbyter of a place elects from his congregation eight or ten of the most sensible and respectable members, to the office of elders or rulers of the church, and one of them is appointed ruling elder. These elders, together with the minister, have a weekly meeting, in which the latter presides, and these weekly assemblies are called *kirk-sessions*. The rights of their church, the state of their poor, and other concerns of the parish, are the objects of deliberation in these meetings. The ministers of each parish, together with their ruling elders, meet every month, in the chief town of their district, and this assembly forms, strictly speaking, *the Presbytery*. They have cognizance of all the church-affairs under their jurisdiction, but not beyond the limits of their district. The clergymen belonging to such a presbytery are not all present, and excuses, on account of absence, are readily admitted. The most important business which engages the attention of these assemblies, is the ordination of young ministers  
for



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for vacant parishes, which is generally performed with much solemnity. Church censures, marriages, and things of a similar nature, fall under their cognizance. The laws of the Scottish church against adultery and fornication are extremely rigid. A man or woman proving guilty of these offences, besides other penalties, must sit upon what is called a repenting-stool, before the whole congregation, whose devotion can hardly be increased by such a strange exhibition. This uncommendable practice, however, is become less frequent within these twenty years, as it appeared that the murder of bastard-children was thereby promoted, and rendered more prevalent in Scotland than in any other Christian country.

The above presbyteries stand under the jurisdiction of the *provincial synods*, of which there are fifteen in all Scotland. They assemble every half year in the principal town of the province, and are composed of twelve, or more, of the neighbouring presbyteries. Appeals may be made from the decrees and decisions of these synods, to the *general assembly*, as the highest ecclesiastical court in the kingdom, which meets annually in the city of Edinburgh, in the month of May, and sits for about ten days. To this respectable assembly, the king nominates a lord  
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commissioner, who is one of the first nobility, and represents, as president, the king's person. If this meeting should become tumultuous, he enjoins peace and order; and if any thing should be proposed against the royal will, he has the power of dissolving the assembly, which has sometimes happened.

The clergy in Scotland differ, in their general character and manner, much from those in England. In what may be called scholastic and theological knowledge, the former is no doubt superior to the latter, and Scotland has, within these thirty years, among its divines, particularly those who reside in universities, very able writers in various branches of literature, who might excite the envy of the English of the same order. Though Dr. Johnson judges of Scotch learning, and Scotch schools and universities, in his usual way, very roughly and unfavourably, yet some are of opinion, that the Scotch education in schools and universities, contributes greatly to that merit which I have mentioned. The Scotch clergy are, in regard to their morals, much stricter, and in their conduct more serious than the English; nay, many of them still bear the character of the old Puritans. They would by no means appear at the performance of a play,  
or

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or in the circle of a rather gay assembly. It has even been related to me, that a clergyman at Edinburgh was blamed for attending a musical concert. The Scotch clergy are said to be in conversation more polite, obliging, and affable than the generality of those in England; which I suppose must be confined to those who are resident in their own country.

The best livings in Scotland are worth no more than a hundred or a hundred and fifty pounds; but there are none so poor as many in England, for no living is under fifty pounds. It is, however, said, that the generality of the Scotch clergy, though no pluralities are allowed, live happily and contentedly, being at the same time very hospitable, and educating their children in a better and more proper manner than many of the English clergy, who enjoy the revenues of more than one church preferment. But it is to be feared, that, as luxury and fashionable living are advancing from the South into Scotland, and making great progress in the country and among its inhabitants, this happiness and contentment will get into decrease, and lessen in proportion as modish wants, dearness of living, and taxes, increase,

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The Scottish clergy have been divided, for many years past, into what are called the orthodox party, and the preachers of morality. The first party endeavoured to instruct and preserve the people in that pure orthodoxy, which they suppose particularly and exclusively adapted for the salvation of souls, by which they mean that system of theology, which, about two hundred years ago, was digested by the divines of Geneva for the benefit and the rule of faith, of what is called the reformed church. The other party had merely in view to make the people, who were intrusted to their pastoral care, better, and to incline their hearts to virtue and morality. They likewise differed from the other party by adopting that, by every orthodox party, controverted opinion of St. Peter the apostle, "that in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." The softer tone, and the persuasive invitations of the latter party, are said to have found more ingress, and to be more liked by sensible people, than the high tone, and the menacing voice, in which the former are used to threaten their flocks, and to exhort them to be upon their guard against the venom of heresy. However, the fiery zeal, and the cordial hatred, which the orthodox party

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party bore to the other, have, within these twenty years, much abated. The last persecution by which they signalized their faith, was directed, in the year 1767, against a worthy clergyman of the name of Fergusson<sup>3</sup>; but their honour and credit getting, on this occasion, in great danger, they were luckily relieved by the death of the object of their persecution, and from that time processes for heresy have got into disgrace; at least, I have not heard that the watchmen of the Scotch Zion have sounded the trumpet of persecution so loudly since.

From what I have just mentioned, it appears very plain, that many in Scotland are found zealously devoted to Calvin's doctrine. They are connected with those in England, that are of the same way of thinking, among whom may be comprehended the generality of Independents, and the Particular-baptists, though neither they, nor their congregations with their teachers, are, in any respect, depending on, or subject to the general assembly in Scotland. The English episcopal church, as well as the Presbyterians, particularly those, who call

<sup>3</sup> See *The Religious Establishment in Scotland examined*. London, 1771. In the Preface to this book, a narrative of this prosecution is given.

them-

themselves Rational Dissenters, are averse to the more rigid part of the Scotch church, and use the appellation of Calvinists as a kind of degradation. I have likewise observed, in some English literary Reviews, when theological publications, written in the old hyper-orthodox style, pass their critical tribunal, that they dismiss them without much ceremony, by saying, that they contain *Calvinistical nonsense*.

As strongly, however, as a part of the Scottish church adheres to Calvin; yet there are some who think that it is not done strictly enough, and, therefore, they have formed congregations upon the original plan, on which Calvin reformed the churches of Geneva. Those that belong to them are called *Seceders*, of which there are likewise two small congregations in London. They are not numerous even in Scotland; and, upon the whole, comparatively speaking, but few Dissenters are to be met with in that kingdom, though toleration, under an act of parliament, is there enjoyed to a greater extent than in England, the clergy of every sect being at liberty to perform every sacerdotal function, marrying not excepted.

At the time of the Revolution, many of the episcopal church in England, who were on the

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side of James II. went to Scotland and established themselves there. They refused to swear allegiance to king William, and would not pray for him at their divine service; for which reason they received the name of Jacobites and Nonjurors, under which denominations they have existed until the year 1788, when, in the month of April, at a meeting of their bishops, at Aberdeen, they unanimously resolved to pray, in express words, for the present royal family in their chapels, so that it may be said that now Jacobites and Nonjurors exist no more.

SANDE-

## S A N D E M A N I A N S.

**T**HE reason why I assign to this sect a place here, is because it originated in Scotland, and may be regarded as an offspring of the Scotch church. Its original founder, John Glas, was a clergyman of the Scottish established religion; but being accused of heresy, he was deprived by the synod of his living, and expelled from the established church. He now formed a congregation of his own, which adopted his opinions and received him as its minister<sup>9</sup>. This happened about the year 1728, from whence the origin of this sect is to be dated. Several other congregations formed themselves soon after, upon the same plan, and those who belonged to them were called Glasfites, which name they have hitherto retained in Scotland.

<sup>9</sup> The works of John Glas are published in four vols. 8vo. and contain, among the rest, an account of himself and his doctrines.



Robert Sandeman, a layman and elder of Mr. Glas's congregation, published, in the year 1755, letters against the late Mr. Hervey's Theron and Aspasio, in which he advances, among other things, that the word faith, as used in the New Testament, means no more than a simple assent to what is said, under divine authority, of Jesus Christ, and that all the other notions, adopted according to Calvin's doctrine, of justifying faith, are erroneous and unfounded. Those of the Glasfites in Scotland, who were addicted to Calvin's Scripture-explanations, began a controversy with Mr. Sandeman, who was then in London, where he had collected a congregation, that adopted his notions, and whose members called themselves Sandemanians. The dispute, however, was, on both sides, carried on very amicably, and the Glasfites in Scotland keep up a strict communion with the Sandemanians in London, though both decline being connected with other churches. There is, as far as I know, but one place of worship where the Sandemanians assemble in London, which is in St. Martin's le Grand, and the congregation consists of not much more than a hundred members. They seem to be rather reserved to those who make enquiries af-

ter the state of their sect; but give them to understand, that they have congregations not only in England and Scotland, but also in North-America. I have been, however, informed, that such congregations are only a few persons, or, perhaps, a single family, which have adopted the religious opinions of the Sandemanians, and are connected with those in London merely by correspondence. Some years ago, a member of that congregation which assembles in St. Martin's-le-Grand, published, in a letter to a friend<sup>10</sup>, an account of their religious tenets, of which the following is the substance. They take the words and precepts of Christ and his apostles in the most literal sense; they follow the practices of the primitive disciples and churches, as far as they can learn them from the New Testament, and avoid every thing carefully for which the first followers of Christ were reprov'd, either by himself or his apostles. On Sundays they meet, pray, sing psalms, preach, and explain the Scriptures. In the interval between the morn-

<sup>10</sup> A Plain and Full Account of the Christian Practices, observed by the Church in St. Martin's-le-Grand, and other Churches in Fellowship with them. In a Letter to a Friend. London, 1767. *Second Edit.*

ing and afternoon service, they have *love-feasts*, of which every member partakes, by dining at the houses of such of their communion who live sufficiently near, and whose habitations are convenient for that purpose. Every one who belongs to the congregation, poor or rich, is not only allowed, but even required, to partake of them. On this, and other opportunities, they salute each other with the kiss of charity, which they think to be a duty expressly ordered in several passages of the New Testament. The Lord's-supper is administered every Sunday by one of the elders, in the most simple form, which is preceded by a collection for the support of the poor, and defraying other expences. They have church-meetings on Tuesdays and Fridays in the evenings, when exhortations are given. They practise pædobaptism, and agree in the unlawfulness of eating blood, and creatures strangled, or suffocated in their blood. They think the washing one another's feet necessary, and that this is commanded in the gospel; they believe it unlawful to lay up treasures on earth, by setting them apart for any distant, future, uncertain use. The lot they esteem to be a sacred thing according to Scripture<sup>1</sup>, and there-

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xvi. 33.

fore judge the using it for diversion to be unlawful, for which reason they are also against playing at cards and dice. They make no distinction between elders, pastors, and bishops, and have a plurality of them in each of their churches, as they are of opinion, that the primitive churches had the same. If a member is justly charged with a scandalous crime, an immediate excommunication takes place, which is done in the presence of the whole church; but if such a person shews full and true repentance, he may be received again. In all their church transactions they deem unanimity absolutely necessary.

From this account which I have given nearly in the words of the above mentioned letter, it may easily be seen, that the intention of those with whom this sect originated, was no other than to form its congregation entirely upon the plan of those in the times of primitive Christianity; which plan they had laid down according to their own ideas and explanation of Scripture. But since times, circumstances, and situations, produce changes, though not in what relates to the essentials of religion, yet in matters relative to externals and accidentals, it is very evident, that these people suppose many

things to be essentials of Christianity, which in fact, were merely accidental in some primitive Christian assemblies, and occasioned by local circumstances, and by that situation in which the first Christians found themselves, in regard to such as made no profession of, or were averse to Christianity. I have observed before, that the Sandemanians are not numerous; and it cannot be well expected that their sect should much increase, since their church discipline, and their moral tenets, are by far too severe for the great majority of our pretended Christians. Among all Christian nations, and particularly among the English and their republican neighbours the Dutch, not many will be found, who would insert that doctrine into their creed, that it was unlawful to lay up treasures on earth, by setting them apart for any distant future use; though the British ministers of finance, and some other classes of people, are of course to be excepted. Very few, likewise, will agree, that dice and cards are too sacred things to be used at play, and that the lot is to be drawn, or to be cast, only in dubious matters, relative to religious affairs. Government receives too welcome a revenue from the lot being drawn at the annual lotteries; and the

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number of those who make their exit on the gallows, would be greater in London, if many did not save themselves from such a fate, by means of cards and dice, when fortune favours them at the gaming-table ; at least they obtain a temporary respite.

## I N D E P E N D E N T S.

**T**O form an idea of the original principles of those who are called in England Independents, I shall only mention what follows. When the parliament party acquired the ascendancy in the reign of Charles I. an ordinance was made in 1643, appointing an assembly of clergymen and laymen, to meet in Westminster-abbey, to be consulted by the parliament, for settling the government and liturgy of the church of England, and ascertaining its doctrine. Among the divines who constituted a part of this assembly, were five who came from Holland, where they had their congregations, consisting of such English as had left their country during former reigns, when the Nonconformists were much oppressed. Those ministers, however, and their congregations, were not Presbyterians, but such as were called Congregationalists in Holland, and had received in England the name of Independents. The rest of the Nonconformist divines, who were members of the assembly, could not agree  
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in several religious opinions with those five, and much complaint was brought against them. Upon which they drew up an *Apologetical Narrative* and presented it to the assembly, after they had signed it with their names, which were Goodwin, Nye, Bridge, Sympfon, and Burroughs. Among other things, they give the following account of their religious belief, and the constitution of their churches. "We consult," they say, "the Scriptures without any prepossessions. We look upon the word of Christ as impartially and unprejudicedly as men of flesh and blood are like to do, in any juncture of time that may fall out." The principles upon which they founded their church-government were, according to this narrative, "*First*, to confine themselves to Scripture precept and precedent, without any supplemental intermixtures of ancient practice, or novel invention. *Secondly*, not to be confined to their present resolutions, without room for alterations, upon farther views and enquiry. They thought it was not impossible, time might inform them better in several particulars, and that it was by no means prudential, to tie themselves up from improvement; and, pursuant to these grounds, they held a middle course between



“Presbytery and Brownism. The first they counted too arbitrary and decisive, and the other too floating and undetermined.”

It appears from this declaration, that they rejected all human authority in matters of faith, keeping, in their own way, only to the Bible, and that they wanted to establish their congregations entirely upon a plan, which they formed, according to their own opinions, from the Scriptures of the New Testament, not caring for the constitutions and the church government of other churches and sects, neither of the first centuries, nor in later times, on a supposition that they were no rules for them to go by, and that there subsisted no obligation to conform to them. The chief characteristic of this sect, however, was the independence of their churches or congregations. They rejected all ecclesiastical establishment; they were against the divisions into parishes and dioceses; they denied all authority of spiritual courts, of councils, of synods, and would by no means allow the interposition of the magistrate in religious concerns. No congregation was to be, in any respect, dependent on another; each composed, within itself, a separate church, which had its own church-government and church-discipline, the censure being

being confined merely to admonition, and this failing in success was followed by excommunication. The public officers of a church were a pastor, a teacher, and a ruling elder, which were ecclesiastics, and deacons. The election of the congregation was fully sufficient to impart a sacerdotal character.

Though the Independents, by what I have said, would not admit any fixed creed, or any symbolical books, yet they remained, in the principal points, addicted to the doctrines of the reformers at Geneva, and even at this time most Independents are Calvinists.

Among the clergy of the Independents some men of learning and abilities are to be found; but there are likewise others, who, on account of their want of a proper education to support a clerical character, are excluded from that *assembly of the general body of Protestant Dissenting ministers in London*, which I have already mentioned. Dr. Doddridge, whose writings are well known with us in Germany, was minister of a congregation of Independents at Northampton, and his name may be considered as an honour to his sect.

Formerly no particular ceremony was required to constitute a minister or teacher of an Independent congregation; but there are now  
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some that have adopted the same manner of ordination which is used by Presbyterians and Baptists. It is sometimes done by imposition of hands, sometimes without it. In this, however, those who have adopted such a kind of ordination distinguish themselves from the Presbyterians, by requiring of the person who is to be ordained, a more explicit confession of his faith, though the words and expressions, in which it is conceived, are left to his own option. This requisition appears to me not altogether consistent with the original plan mentioned before, upon which the first congregational churches were formed.

Formerly the Presbyterians were more numerous than the Independents; but, at present, the case is reversed. What Mosheim therefore asserts of the sects of the Independents requires some alteration. "*Hodie,*" he says, "*superstes quidem est, verum timida et attrita; qua infirmitate sua impulsæ est, ut Wilhelmo III. rege, A. MDCXCI. societatem cum Presbyterianis Londini et in agro Londinensi de gentibus, salvis institutis suis iniverit.*" The reason why this increase of Independents has happened is, because they still adhere to Calvinistical principles, which were maintained by the old Presbyterians, and resemble them much

\* MOSHEIM Institut. Hist. Eccles. p. 977.

in their manner of preaching. The modern Presbyterians, on the contrary, have abandoned the Calvinistic doctrines; their sermons are more moral and rational than those of their predecessors, though in their ideas of church government they differ very little from the Independents. The loss, therefore, of Calvinistical orthodoxy has lessened the number of Presbyterians, and the strict adherence to it has increased that of the Independents. This, however, is to be understood only when both sects are compared with each other; for there is reason to suppose that both, as Dissenters, have decreased, though the one more than the other.

It is a singular fact, as Mr. Hume observes, “ That of all Christian sects this was the first, “ which during its prosperity, as well as its “ adversity, always adopted the principles of “ toleration; and, it is remarkable, that so “ reasonable a doctrine owed its origin, not to “ reasoning, but to the height of extravagance “ and fanaticism.” How far the latter part of this observation may be strictly true, I will not here enquire; from that declaration in the *Apologetical Narrative* which I have quoted in the beginning of this article, it does not appear that those who drew it up were tinged with so

1 HUME'S Hist. of Great Brit. vol. vii. p. 20.

much fanaticism as Mr. Hume seems to lay, without restriction, to the charge of this sect.

Some writers of English history, particularly that part of it, which relates to the civil war in the reign of Charles I. have given the Independents a very bad name. Both Rapin and Hume draw the character of this sect in very unfavourable colours, but by others they are represented in a better light. Without entering into any examination of the truth of the charge brought against them, the conjecture of Mosheim seems to me to be not without foundation, that the religious Independents were accused of many things which ought to have been attributed to those who, in political and civil matters, entertained and supported principles, from which they might be styled state Independents\*; principles which now are maintained by political writers of acknowledged ability and considerable reputation. The religious opinions of this sect, which I have mentioned, are certainly not such as Rapin describes them, “ That they

\* Lubens, ut arbitror, fatebitur, cui libros et formulas sectæ æquæ mente inspicere et ponderare licuit, multa ei crimina temere tribui, et fortassis *Independentium* civilium, id est, hominum regis potestati inimicorum et immodicæ libertati studentium, facinora ad *Independentes* religiosos incaute translata esse. *Mosheimii Institut. Hist. Eccl. p. 973.*

“ were

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“ were contrary to those of all the rest of the  
“ world;” nor can it, in my opinion, be said,  
consistently with that spirit of toleration, for  
which they were known, “ That their other  
“ principles were very proper to put the king-  
“ dom in a flame, as they did effectually.”  
Those who were called Independents in reli-  
gion, I believe, were not justly liable to such a  
charge.

5 Rapin's History, Vol. II. p. 514.

## BAPTISTS

## BAPTISTS AND SABBATARIANS.

**T**HE English Baptists are divided into *general* and *particular* Baptists. The former are almost all of a liberal way of thinking, and great friends to Socinianism. For this reason, several men eminent for learning, such as Emlyn, William Whiston, and Dr. Foster, have been of their party. The particular Baptists are zealous Calvinists, and very orthodox in their way. They are much more numerous than the former, and it may easily be supposed, from the great difference of their principles, that the two parties are but little connected. Of general Baptists only two congregations exist, at present, in London, which are very small; but the other party has, as I have been informed, about fifteen meeting-houses within the bills of mortality, and very near two hundred in all England. In North America, and mostly in Connecticut, the particular Baptists are said to be very numerous. They were formerly in a closer connection and correspondence with those of their party in England

land than at present; though even now something of this kind is kept up.

The ordinations of their ministers are performed almost in the same manner, as among the Presbyterians; but as Methodism seems lately to have much prevailed among many of the particular Baptists, it is not uncommon for unlearned men to preach among them, or even to become ministers of a congregation, when they feel, as they express themselves, an inward call for it. A late eminent clergyman of a Baptist meeting in London assured me, some years ago, that seven people of his own congregation, though they never pursued any studies, and had always been only illiterate tradesmen, officiated with signal success, as ministers of Baptist congregations. There being no fund out of which the salaries of the minister can be paid, they are supported, like the other dissenting clergy, by the voluntary contributions of their congregations, and their incomes depend on the smallness or largeness, and the liberality of their flock. There is a kind of fund established among the particular Baptists, to assist those of their preachers whose income is not sufficient for their support; but the produce of this fund being not very large the assistance given from it cannot be very great.



The chief characteristic of this sect is their act of baptism, in which they use the immersion of the whole body, and baptize adults only. In London they have for this purpose, in the principal of their meetings, proper Baptisteries; but in the country, where they have no such conveniences, they baptize in rivers. I have seen an act of baptism of this kind, which was performed in a small river before the town in which the Baptist meeting was. The ceremony took place very early in the morning, between five and six o'clock, in order to avoid a concourse of people from other sects, who, in all probability, would have disturbed the devotion. When the clergyman, with those who were to be baptized, and a considerable number of his congregation arrived at the river side, on the spot where the ceremony was to be performed, he addressed them in a short speech suitable to the occasion, and then went with those who were to receive baptism, one after the other, into the water, till it reached their breast, he himself being dressed in a morning gown, and the candidates for baptism in their old cloaths. Coming to the proper depth, he took the person whom he was going to baptize by his cloaths, at the neck, bent him backwards under the water, pronouncing at the same time the

the following words: "After a true confession: "of faith, and repentance from sins towards "God, I baptize thee, *sister or brother*, N. N. "in the name of God the Father, the Son, and "the Holy Spirit." This being done, he conducted the baptized person back to the shore, and took another in the same manner, till he had dipped them all, there being at that time four in number. I confess, that before I saw this baptismal act, I had no great expectation of its exciting much devotion; but I found the contrary. Never could any act of baptism have a nearer resemblance to those performed in the river Jordan, nor consequently better assist the imagination of those, who had read the accounts of baptisms in the Bible with any veneration, than this imitation: indeed, I observed some of those who were present shedding tears.

As to the schools and academics among the Baptists, they are of the same kind, and upon the same plan, as those among the other Dissenters. Thomas Crosby, who was the author of the best history of the Baptists, kept such a school, and got his livelihood by it. Though he was one of the general Baptists, his history is nevertheless acknowledged, even by the particular Baptists, to be written with great impar-

tiality. There is a Baptist school at Bath, which has some fund for the education of a small number of youth. At Horsleydown they have a charity-school, in which about sixty children are instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. At Bath the Baptists have a kind of a public library, which, as it is said, contains many good books.

There is a third class of Baptists, called *Sabbatarians*, because they celebrate, besides Sunday, Saturday likewise, as the Jews do the sabbath. Their number is exceedingly small in London, and I have not heard that there are any others besides them in any part of England. It is supposed, that within a few years this sect will be extinct; and I wonder it has subsisted so long. Some Baptist congregations are not fond of singing in their public worship, but they are said to be very few in number.

## A N T I N O M I A N S.

**T**HE English Antinomians are not to be confounded either with those who bore this name in the fourth century; or with them that created so much disturbance in Germany at the time of the Reformation. Those who go under this name in England, are people that have carried Calvin's doctrine of predestination to the very utmost extent, and have shewn how deeply men may sink into errors and folly, notwithstanding the loud contradictions of reason. The name of Antinomians was given them by others, with which they were, at first, not much pleased. They differ in their religious opinions among themselves. Some pretend that those who are elect, or predestinated to salvation, do not sin, though they commit the greatest crimes, because such an elect person can never do wrong; and if he were pronounced by the world to be guilty of enormous sins, yet he is not so in the eye of God. They, therefore, deny, in this respect, all morality in human actions. Others contend that

it is quite unnecessary to preach the law, because those who are elect do not want it, and those who are predestined to eternal damnation can reap no benefit from it, though they were ever so carefully instructed in God's commandments. Hoornbeeks<sup>s</sup> has given a pretty circumstantial account of the origin and the opinions of these people, and I must refer to him, those who wish to have more information concerning them. The learned Thomas Gataker and John Flavel, wrote, in the last century, according to the custom of the times, thick books against this nonsense; but their voluminous writings on this subject, have been long since forgotten. This sect, for the honour of reason, is decaying very fast; and it is to be hoped, that it will be soon extinct.

<sup>s</sup> *Summa controversiarum*, Lib. x. p. 816, seq.

## UNITARIANS, ARIANS, SOCINIANS, ARMINIANS.

**T**HE doctrine of the Trinity has met in England, particularly during this century, with much opposition. I believe, that it is rejected by many of the established church, though they do not openly declare themselves, for fear it might endanger their temporal subsistence, and deprive them of their incomes. There are, however, several who freely declare their sentiments in regard to this doctrine, though they find themselves under a necessity of using the liturgy, and of reading the Athanasian Creed before their congregations. Others have, in later times, resigned their clerical functions, and their livings, renouncing the communion of that church in which they were bred. Among the Dissenting clergy, as I have before observed, the generality of those who call themselves Rational Dissenters, are Antitrinitarians, or, as they rather choose to call themselves, Unitarians ; and many are Arians. Dr. Priestley, in his writings, charges the esta-

blished church publicly with idolatry, on account of its adopting the doctrine of the Trinity, and he thinks this to be the chief reason, why a separation from it is just and proper. In his *Forms of Prayer for the Use of Unitarian Societies*, he expresses himself thus: "Such a corrupt mode of religion enjoined by the civil powers, under which we live, will no more authorize or excuse our conformity to it, than the same considerations would have justified the primitive Christians in conforming to the rites of the Pagan worship, which were enjoined by the laws of the Roman empire." As Dr. Priestley is a man of great eminence among the Dissenters, and a minister of a congregation, it may be easily supposed what, in regard to this article, the sentiments of those are who hear and regard him. He endeavours to make proselytes to his Unitarian doctrine, and exhorts those who adopt it, not to frequent, but to leave the congregations, where the doctrine of the Trinity is thought to be a fundamental one. For Sunday's devotions, if it were even but in one family, he has composed the above mentioned book of prayers, and added forms for baptism, according to the Unitarian principles, which may be used by any person who wants to perform that cere-

ceremony; for, in his opinion, the clerical order is by no means necessary, and laymen may administer baptism and the Lord's-Supper, as well as clergymen. To remove the difficulties of preaching, he recommends several collections of sermons, among whom, however, many are written by Trinitarian divines. As for the externals of divine worship, and matters relating to church-government, he leaves that to be regulated as it may be found expedient; "Let them," he says, "unite only upon that single great principle of Christian faith, that there is one God, and Christ is the creature, the servant, the messenger of God."

It does credit to the present times, that Dr. Priestley was not at all attacked, or called to an account for writing in this manner by any civil or ecclesiastical power. Two hundred years ago, he could not have dared to do so without endangering his life; for within that space of time, the English history mentions several Unitarians, Socinians, and Arians, who have suffered at the stake, on account of their religious opinions.

William Whiston and Dr. Samuel Clarke ought to be reckoned among the Arians; and by means of their authority, particularly of the latter,



latter, it happened, that many of the dissenting clergy adopted Arianism. But as all things take their turns, and old ones are laid aside and forgotten, so I believe that, within these twenty years, Socinianism has got the better over Arianism; a few, perhaps, excepted stick to the latter, and assert the pre-existence of Christ. Dr. Clarke, on whose judgment some have hesitated to pronounce favourably, was, nevertheless, a man of learning, a worthy character, and a man of an excellent heart. It is said, that he declined accepting the episcopal dignity when it was offered to him, merely because he could not demand the subscription of the Thirty-nine Articles at the ordination of candidates, when he himself did not believe every one of them to be founded in truth. It is asserted that sir Isaac Newton was one of his disciples in Arianism. Many of the episcopal clergy, and even, as it is said, bishop Hoadly, the friend of Dr. Clarke, have adopted Arianism, and there may be now some who do the same. But as every thing grows old, and the repute and admiration of an eminent man ceases soon after his death, the Clarke-Arian system is almost sunk into oblivion, and Socinianism has succeeded

ed in its place. Among the Dissenting clergy many have adopted Dr. Clarke's system. There are, here and there, in the country; and in London, some Dissenting congregations that are Arians, and if all who frequent such a meeting-house are not of that persuasion, the minister is at least; but as such congregations are unsettled, and the minister dies away, nothing with certainty can be said about them. I have heard that there is a Dissenting congregation at Exeter, which publicly professes Arianism. Those of the episcopal clergy who entertain Arian principles, do not profess them openly, for fear they should endanger their income wherewith they support themselves.

The present state of Socinianism<sup>6</sup>, or as it is called in preference, of the Unitarian doctrine

<sup>6</sup> I am far from using the terms Socinianism, and Socinian as a reproach; but as abroad we very seldom use the word *Unitarian*, and that of *Socinian* is well understood by us, I have in the German original generally made use of the latter, which is the reason that I retain it in the translation. The Jews and the Mahomedans are all Unitarians; and I believe that many a good and thinking man, professing the Christian religion, may have reasoned himself into Socinianism and the doctrines connected with it, without having ever heard the name of Socinus, much less read his works.

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trine and worship, may be learnt from a late publication of Mr. Lindsey<sup>7</sup>. He was till the year 1773, vicar of Catterick in Yorkshire, but resigned his living, because he found the Thirty-nine Articles of the church in which he was educated, not altogether conformable to truth, and thought it inconsistent with his conscience, and the duties he owed to the only true God, to read the liturgy of the established church, and particularly the Achanasian creed, before his congregation<sup>8</sup>. After his resignation he came to London, where he established a chapel in Essex-street, in which divine service is performed, and a liturgy used upon Unitarian principles. His brother-in-law, Dr. Disney, took afterwards the same step, quitted the church of England, and since the year 1782, assists Mr. Lindsey in his chapel. Dr. Disney shewed his disinterestedness, and his

*Verba valent ut nummi*, the doctrines and opinions of Socinus are well known, and whenever they are met with, I do not see any harm, nor any reflexion conveyed, in calling them Socinianism.

<sup>7</sup> An Historical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worship, from the Reformation to our Times. By Theophilus Lindsey, A. M. London. 1783. 8vo.

<sup>8</sup> The Apology of Theophilus Lindsey, M. A, on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, in Yorkshire. London.

1774

conscientious sincerity, by resigning two livings which he held in Lincolnshire. The reasons for so doing he has likewise published in a manner which does him great credit. Both Mr. Lindsey and Dr. Disney intimate in their publications, relative to the reasons why they left the Church of England, that they know several clergymen of that communion, whose sentiments, in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, are similar to their own, but who still continue in the church, because they would, if they resigned their livings, be deprived of their subsistence. Of those, who as learned men, professing what is called Socinianism, were then living, when Mr. Lindsey published his *Historical View*, Dr. William Robertson, Dr. Jebb, Dr. William Chambers, Mr. Tyrer, Mr. Evanson, Mr. Harries, and Mr. Maty of the British Museum, are mentioned. Most of these gentlemen enjoyed preferments in the Church of England, which they resigned, one only excepted; and it is rather remarkable that most of them have been members of the university of Cambridge. It is understood that the late Mr. Blackburn, archdeacon of Cleveland, who is so well known as the celebrated author of the *Confessional*, was an Unitarian; but he did not think it necessary

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to resign his preferments, and died not long ago, at the age of eighty.

It may easily be imagined, that those who call themselves Unitarians, agree with Socinus in regard to the doctrines of redemption, satisfaction, and others that are connected with them, though, perhaps, they do not espouse all his opinions. These doctrines, however, are even in episcopal pulpits, seldom treated according to the orthodox system; much less are the controversies mentioned which they have excited.

The account of the Unitarians given by Mr. Lindsey relates mostly to those of the episcopal church; but their number among the Dissenters is far greater, and rather increasing than diminishing, not only in London, but in the country also. Many congregations, I believe, have ministers, who are disciples of Socinus; but whether the members of them are of the same opinion, is not easily ascertained; the generality, I suppose, are not, but rather inclined to Arianism. They, however, do not seem to be offended at the Socinian or Unitarian belief of their minister, if he be otherwise a deserving man, and a good preacher, who teaches sound moral doctrines. Few of the Dissenting clergy,

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who have adopted Socinian principles, enter much into this subject in the pulpit, but rather follow the example of the late Dr. Lardner, who, among his friends, made no secret of his Socinianism, but never mentioned any thing relating to it in his discourses before a congregation.

As to Arminianism, I believe that the number of those who have adopted it in England is very great, particularly among the clergy, and not only that which is called *Arminianismus prior*, but also that which goes under the denomination of *Arminianismus posterior*. Yet, according to the difference of the sects, each takes from Arminianism what suits it best, for there are no particular congregations that assume the name of Arminians. Mr. Wesley, as I have before observed, chooses to style himself an Arminian, but he refers to Arminianism, merely the five points or articles that were condemned by the synod of Dort, and which were, in fact, the doctrines of Luther. Among the Dissenters, as well as the episcopal clergy, the more enlarged Arminianism is adopted by those, who are neither decidedly orthodox, nor Socinians, nor Deists. They do not think the doctrine of the Trinity

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an article of faith; they deny what is called original sin, and adopt most of the Arminian opinions, which are condemned by those, who think themselves exclusively in possession of the true faith, or of orthodoxy.

QUAKERS.

## Q U A K E R S.

**I**T is to be regretted that this sect is rather on the decline. In church-history very few, if any, I believe, will be found, where the purity of morals, and that rectitude and virtue, which are so indispensably requisite to the happiness of human society, have been shewn more strongly and more generally, than among the Quakers. When I first came to England, I entertained all the prejudices which are so prevalent against them among other sects. I viewed them in much the same light with which they are generally regarded abroad, from ignorance and pious pride, by the zealots of all the three religious sects which are predominant in Germany. But how great was my surprize, when, after more enquiry and acquaintance, I found them better formed after the spirit of true Christianity, than those who make it their business to decry them. I by no means intend to pronounce a panegyric upon the Quakers; I do not approve many of the opinions which are said to be theirs. The pretensions to the mov-



ing, or the impulse of the spirit, they should have renounced long ago; for it seems to be a slur upon that good sense which is otherwise so prevalent among them. But their morals, their education, their early subduing the passions, their conduct in life, their principles, and their manner of thinking—in short their moral character; how much were it to be wished, that it might become general, and be adopted by all sects whatever!

If this sect had originated formerly among the ancient Greeks, and if Fox, the shoemaker, had been the founder of a philosophical sect of antiquity, instead of a religious one in modern times, he would have acquired a great name, and his followers would have been deemed the best among all philosophers. Supposing we forget for a moment, that we are speaking of the Quakers, and related what follows as the tenets of ancient philosophers, who not only taught but really practised them:—all men are to live in peace and unanimity together, which not only their reason but even their feelings demand of them. To teach this we have no occasion to support a particularly-dressed class of people, and feed them with the tenth of our industry. Every one is to set a good example, and to become a teacher of that virtue which promotes  
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his own happiness, and that of the community. What we wish men should do to us, we should do even so to them. We are to avoid those things which perplex the understanding, and do not mend the heart, but produce altercation and strife; for, as our time is so short, we ought to make the best use of it, and apply it to the best purposes, for our own happiness and that of others. We are to combat and to subdue our passions early, and to accustom ourselves to patience and self-denial, for we have much occasion for both in the course of our lives. We are to be charitable, and to assist, if we have it in our power, the infirm and the necessitous, without being forced to it by law. We are to speak the truth from inclination, sincerely at all times, without calling the Deity to witness, to remove the suspicion of uttering falsehood and untruth. Men are all by nature equal, and possessed of the same rights, and every one is to endeavour to do good; nobody, therefore, is to oppress another, and to encroach upon his rights from arrogance. Men are not come into the world to destroy each other; but they are to live together peaceably and with forbearance, without training up a class of men for the purpose of slaughtering others. We are to dress ourselves according to cleanliness and de-

cency; but not to betray the vanity of the heart, and the emptiness of the head, by folly and idle shew. On the day which is weekly set apart for divine worship, we are to assemble with brotherly affection towards each other; we are to collect our thoughts, to meditate and to examine our lives, and to engage our devout attention in contemplating the perfections of the Deity, and his kindness towards us; we are to remember our frailties and our transgressions, and being ashamed of them, we are to renew our good resolutions and intentions, endeavouring to improve, by daily practice, in virtue and in true happiness. Supposing we met in Plutarch, or in Diogenes Laertius, with an account of philosophers who professed not only such doctrines, but practised them with unremitted care; would it not be said, that they really deserved that name? And this sect arose only in the last century, and continues still; and their chief religious tenets are those which I have just mentioned.

It is true, that in every flock some rotten sheep are to be found; but they are not very frequent among the Quakers, and when they are discovered they are separated. There are in London two sorts of Quakers, the *dry* and the *wet*, which names, I believe, are given them by  
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way of joke. The first class consists of the old, genuine, serious, and stiff Quakers; the other of those who have laid aside a great deal of the manners and formalities of the former, and do not scruple to adopt some of the fashions and the follies of the times and of other sects. Among the former, whom I may call the orthodox Quakers, some, however, may be found who are as vain and proud of their old simple dress, with a few buttons and a few folds only; of their small buckles and their carefully brushed broad-brimmed hats, as a modern macaroni of his modish and fantastical dress. In regard to the other sex, it is comparatively the same. It is said, that the honest patriarch of the Quakers, George Fox, was not a little proud of his apostolical habit, which was all of leather, and that he was as unwilling to touch and to pull off his skin-cap for any body, as the present prim Quakers are to take off their hats.

I have long observed the moral character of the Quakers, and that which the majority of them maintain, appears to me to be very commendable, and worthy of imitation. As long as I have resided in London, I have never heard of one instance wherein a Quaker, as a criminal, was condemned to death, or to suffer corporeal punishment; nay, even at the Old Bailey, not

one, so far as I know, has been arraigned within these twenty years'. Suicide, which is so common among the English, has not been committed by a Quaker, whilst I was in England; at least I never heard of any instance of the kind. Quakers are liable to all human frailties and transgressions as well as other men; violations of the matrimonial vow, neglect of chastity, selfishness, stubbornness, and other faults will take place among them; but I am confident, that they are by no means so frequent as among other sects. The Quakers maintain their own poor, and no beggars are to be found of their community; they do not send them to the parish, or the workhouse, to which they must pay according to law, but they support them by their own voluntary contributions. Quarrels and disputes are not frequent among them, and whoever, not being of their sect, enters with warmth into a dispute with them, generally gets the worse, particularly on becoming animated; for the Quaker has a great advantage from his coolness, and by having learnt to keep his temper. No swearing or cursing is heard

<sup>†</sup> It was mentioned in April, 1786, in the public papers, that a poor wretch, said to be a Quaker, had been condemned at the Chester assizes, for poisoning his wife; but it was soon after publicly denied that he was of that sect.

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among them; they do not make oath, but only affirm, which in law, except in criminal cases, stands as good as a solemn oath. Many a culprit has by this means saved his life; for if a Quaker happens to be the chief evidence, and refuses the oath, the delinquent gets clear, though it be ever so evident that he is guilty.

That there are no particular teachers among the Quakers, who are paid by the community, resembling the clergy of other sects, I need not mention; but there are some, who, without fee or salary, as more able speakers than others, will hold forth in their meetings, and, therefore, resemble a kind of preachers. Thus, some years ago, the brother of the late Dr. Fothergill, was regarded as an eminent preacher among the Quakers. Many of their meetings are held without speaking, and such silent meetings, as they are called, are most frequent. Sometimes a few words only are spoken, and it is seldom that any body entertains the congregation longer than five minutes, or, at the utmost, fifteen; and what is then said, is delivered in so slow a manner, that there is a pretty long pause, between every word which is pronounced. It happens likewise that a man or a woman rises, as if going to speak, but on second consideration sits down again, without uttering a syllable.

Those who are in expectation, that the spirit will move them for speaking, will now and then seat themselves on a place which is peculiarly designed for the speakers.

In the month of May, about Whitsuntide, Quakers, from all parts of the world, where they are to be found, resort to London, and it is then, that the best opportunities offer, for hearing some speeches in their meetings. In London, Westminster, and Southwark, as I have been informed, are about six Quaker-meetings. Formerly there were more, but the sect rather decreasing, some meeting-houses have ceased, and some have been united with others. In the country, almost in every town, Quaker-meetings are to be found, which distinguish themselves by their simplicity and their neatness within. Nothing but seats and benches are to be seen, which are painted in such colours as the Quakers generally choose for their clothes. No altars, no communion-tables, no baptisteries, no ornaments, no prayer or hymn-books are to be seen, for they do without these things, being chiefly satisfied with silent devotion.

Marriages are concluded among them in the most simple manner. After an enquiry has been made, whether no impediments are to be found, to prevent two people from marrying, they

they meet at an appointed time in their meeting-houses, where the bridegroom declares before the congregation, that he will take the woman present for his wife, and be faithful to her, which declaration is likewise made on the side of the bride. They sign afterwards their names in a book kept for that purpose, and as many of those present, as choose to do it, add their names as witnesses. Sometimes an elderly Quaker will make a prayer on the occasion, or give an exhortation to the married couple, but it is neither very common nor requisite; every thing is done without ceremony, and no clerical fees of any kind are demanded or paid. From this it may easily be supposed, that no divorces between Quakers can take place in an ecclesiastical court of the established church, as their clergy has nothing to do with Quaker marriages; whatever, therefore, of this kind happens among parties of this sect, must be done by voluntary separation on both sides. But, if such kind of divorce is agreed upon, among themselves, the parties thus separated, are not permitted to marry again during the life of either; for Quaker marriages are, in the eye of the English law, as valid, as if they were celebrated in a parish church,

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The burials among the Quakers are without the least shew or pomp. They carry their dead to the grave without ceremony. Their burying-places are without tomb-stones, or monuments with ostentatious inscriptions, not always conformable to truth; for the honesty, as well as the modesty of the Quakers, does not admit of such things. Neither do they go into mourning for deceased relations, being, in this respect, too deficient in pride and hypocrisy.

The Quakers educate their children for trade, or other useful professions. To train them for preachers, lawyers, or soldiers, is out of the question with them. The medical art is the only one of what are called the liberal professions, which is pursued by some of them, and though they are against all titles, that of a doctor in physic is the only one which they admit. To study this salutary art, and to take the academical degree, they generally go to a Dutch university. During my residence in London, some eminent physicians have been Quakers.

That stiffness and formality which are rather too common among this sect, have frequently been made a topic of ridicule; and, perhaps, not without some reason. But this very affectation, as it is called, has tended to preserve

them against being contaminated by the world, if I may thus express myself; and, in proportion as this stiffness wears off, as it begins to do, the sect itself will more decrease. It may, however, be said in excuse of that reservedness of character so conspicuous among the Quakers, that hypocrisy and affectation have not so great a share in it as is supposed by many. Their manner of educating their children, contributes much towards that disposition of character, which inclines to seriousness, reservedness, and formality. There are among other sects, many, who, on account of their dignities, their dress, or rank in society, adopt an air of gravity and seriousness, which is frequently the offspring of pride and hypocrisy. They come under that description of Juvenal,

. . . *Curios simulant et Bacchanalia vivunt,*

which, I believe, can seldom be applied to the Quakers. They have, however, several singularities about them which deserve censure, and the mildest denomination that can be given them is that of real affectation. Thus, for instance, they will not call a church a church, but a steeple-house; they reject the common and in general adopted names of the months in the year, and the days in the week, calling  
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them rather the first or the second month, or the first or second day of the week, &c. In their slow and solemn manner of speaking, something affected likewise appears; but I am doubtful whether it can be classed among their faults. If in our education we followed the example of the Quakers, and were strictly kept to speak slowly, and to utter our thoughts deliberately like them, there is no doubt but peace in society, and tranquillity of mind within us, would be infinitely better kept than is now the case.

It is said, that the number of Quakers in England, at present, amounts to between sixty and seventy thousand; but I do not know whether this calculation can be depended upon. These people support themselves by industry, and following some profession or trade, by which many acquire riches.

The Quakers, considered as a society, have established the best regulations among themselves. Their religious concerns are, without canonical law, without ecclesiastical courts and consistories, taken care of in a more regular, equitable, and peaceable manner than in those countries, where the honour of the Deity and the purity of religion, together with the salvation of souls, is intrusted to high tribunals,  
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and tremendous inquisitorial courts, whose members are amply paid, and do not live in the practice of abstinence and self-denial. The meetings of the Quakers, for regulating the concerns of their society, are various. Some are weekly, others monthly, and others quarterly. That which is kept annually in London, in the month of May, as I have already mentioned, might be called the grand synod of the Quakers. They then assemble from all parts of the world where members of this sect are settled. A letter, concerning the state of the whole community for the year past, is then published by the synod, written in a simple unadorned style, which carries a kind of intrinsic evidence of truth along with it, and, on account of its neatness, is generally inserted in the public Newspapers, by their editors. Their sufferings, by which they mean the tithes, and some other taxes, which they are very unwilling to pay, are particularly noticed in this epistle.

Many Quaker-schools are established in London as well as in the country. The boys in them are not so educated as to lead them to be proud of erudition, nor the girls to excel in modish follies. They are taught reading, writing, some arithmetic, cleanliness, decency, to controul their passions, to be silent, and in  
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short all those virtues which promote the happiness of life, and render them useful members in society. Singing, catechizing, long prayers, and such other things, as are the occupations in which children in other schools are employed, are, as may easily be imagined, not common in those of the Quakers. Yet these two kinds of schools, when compared to each other, make a singular contrast; for, whoever observes the children in the common schools in England, might be inclined to think, that the generality of them never prayed or received any instruction in religion; when, on the other side, the quiet and regular conduct of those in Quaker-schools, has the appearance as if their occupations were nothing but saying their prayers, and learning as well as practising a strict and orthodox catechism. The saying of Seneca, *Brevis via per exempla, longa per præcepta*, is in this instance very visible. The school-masters and school-mistresses among the Quakers, together with the parents, recommend by their example, what they teach them as doctrines and rules of conduct. At Ackworth the Quakers have a very respectable school, which the late Dr. Fothergill has remembered in his last will, by considerable legacies. The buildings are neat and very convenient. About 200 boys  
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and 140 girls are educated there, under the care of five school-masters, and three school-mistresses, who are subject to an overseer. Besides the number of children above mentioned, others of opulent Quakers are educated in this school at the expence of their parents.

At Clerkenwell in London, the Quakers have a well regulated school and workhouse. Charitable institutions of the same kind, belonging also to this sect, are to be found in other parts of England.

## ROMAN CATHOLICS.

**T**HE question, whether the interest of the Roman Catholics is rising or sinking is very differently decided. Some, from motives of fear and selfishness, have represented it as dangerously increasing; others, who seem to be better informed, declare it to be decaying. The principal of these reasons are, *first*, because several English noblemen, and others of rank and fortune, whose ancestors were of the Romish persuasion, have, from motives of temporal interests, which may be derivd from the emoluments and honours to be enjoyed by conforming to the established church, or from conviction, left the religion of their forefathers, and turned Protestants; by which means many of those who were connected with, or depended on them, have followed their example. *Secondly*, because the Roman Catholics, as well as the Protestants, grow more and more indifferent about matters of religion.

As far as I am acquainted with the character of the English Roman Catholics, the generality

of them are quiet, peaceable, and industrious people, who, as good citizens, are intitled to all the protection of government. It was, therefore, perfectly agreeable to humanity and justice, that certain hard and severe laws, which were formerly made against them, have been repealed by later acts of parliament.

It is very true, that within these forty years, none of them have been put in force; but it was owing to mere connivance, and every evil-minded person might have turned informer against them, in which case, those laws and penalties must have been put in execution. For this reason, several lords and other gentlemen of rank and fortune, who profess the catholic religion, presented, in 1778, an address to the king, in which they returned thanks for that indulgence hitherto shewn to them, and recommended themselves, and their English Roman Catholic brethren, to the wisdom and farther kindness of government. A few weeks after this, sir George Savile made a motion in the house of commons, that several severe laws, made in the reign of king William, against the Roman Catholics, might be repealed. This was granted, but Mr. Fox's motion, to free them from paying a double land-tax, did not



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succeed. The common people, however, no doubt at the instigation of some who wanted to persuade them that an unlimited toleration was to be granted to the Roman Catholics, shewed a discontent, which first broke out in Scotland, by disturbances and outrages committed against them. A new-built Roman Catholic chapel at Edinburgh was set on fire in the year 1779, and several houses of inhabitants, who were of that persuasion, shared the same fate. As a beginning of such popular tumults was thus made in Scotland, it propagated itself, under the auspices of lord George Gordon, into England the following year, when the ever-memorable riots happened in London, to which I myself was a witness. But as these things are so recent in memory, I forbear giving here an account of them, and content myself with observing only, that certainly no premeditated plan was previously formed by the rioters, though this was supposed, even by some who were then in the administration of government. Lord George Gordon himself, I am convinced, when he began to assemble the mob, never dreamed that matters would be carried to such a height; nor was there the least foundation for a rumour, which then prevailed, that it was well known  
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long before at Paris, and even at Philadelphia, that such things were to happen in England. The French grand fleet was at that time actually on the British coast, and had the commanders of it been in possession of the least previous intelligence of these tumults, which produced so much consternation, they might have turned it greatly to their advantage; for all London, and the then ministry itself, were in such a panic, as I have never before seen in my life, and hope I never shall be witness to again. If government had not slighted lord George Gordon's advertisement to assemble such a multitude, or even, when it was assembled, had immediately shewn proper exertion and spirit against the rioters, one troop of dragoons might have dispersed the whole mob, which consisted mostly of apprentices and other boys, and the tumults would have been quieted the instant they began, before they rose to such a height, and did so much mischief. However, after public peace and tranquillity were restored, lord George Gordon's intention, and that of his mob, to infringe upon the laws of religious toleration, did not, for the honour of the times and the country, succeed; and the Roman Catholics have since remained unmolested.

About that time a well-written pamphlet<sup>a</sup> made its appearance, which gives the best account of the present state of the Catholics in England. The author himself is, as he says, an English Catholic, educated in an English college abroad, and he writes as a man of candour and of a liberal mind. According to his representation, by an arrangement which took place in the reign of James II. England was divided into four districts, and a bishop was appointed to preside over each. A salary of a thousand pounds per annum was settled on every one of them, payable at the exchequer; which, however, continued only till the Revolution, when they were reduced to the necessity of supporting themselves, and one hundred pounds per annum, is, at present, more than equal to the revenue of their episcopal see. This number of bishops has hitherto continued, and as they have no place of residence allotted, each of them chuses his own place to live, and in as central and convenient a situation as possible. Their office is to attend the small concerns of their respective districts; to administer confirmation, and provide the different congregations

<sup>a</sup> The State and Behaviour of English Catholics, from the Reformation to the Year 1780; with a View of their present Number, Wealth, Character, &c. London, 1780.

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with priests from abroad ; for they do not ordain any in England from political reasons.

The number of priests which were employed, at the time when the pamphlet was written, amounted to about 360. The northern district, which takes in the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Durham, York, Lancaster and Chester, contains the greatest number of priests and catholics, of which the former were 167. Some of them, however, are only chaplains to private gentlemen, where there are no congregations. The western district, comprehends the western counties and Wales. The catholics being there not numerous, have only 44 priests. The London district comprehends nine counties towards the east and south. It has 58 priests, and the catholic interest is declining there very fast. The midland district contains the counties which are situated in the middle of the kingdom, and has, comparatively speaking, the greatest number of Catholics, though there were forty years ago a third more than now. At present they are calculated at 8,460, which are under the care of 90 priests. It appears from the foregoing, that the number of the latter, in all the districts together, does not much exceed 350. Some of them are chaplains in gentlemen's families, and

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have the care of the little congregations around them ; others reside in towns, or in some country places, where funds have been settled for their support. The chapels are in their own houses. Twenty pounds per annum is thought a very handsome salary for a gentleman's chaplain ; and if the rural curate has twenty more to keep himself, his horse, and his servant, it will be said that he is well provided. Some of the manufacturing and trading towns, as Norwich, Manchester, Liverpool, Wolverhampton, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, have chapels, which are rather crowded.

The whole number of Catholics in England at present does not exceed 60,000. Among them are counted the following six lords : the earl of Shrewsbury, lord Stourton, lord Petre, lord Arundel, lord Dormer, and lord Clifford. Lord Surry, now duke of Norfolk, and lord Teynham, have conformed within my time. There were nineteen Catholic baronets a few years ago, but some have lately turned Protestants also. Of esquires and gentlemen there may be about 150, but the greater part of them have no more than a thousand pounds per annum in landed property. The eldest sons of the Catholic gentry do not engage in trade, and the younger ones either remain  
among

among their relations and friends, or engage in the service of some foreign prince ; few take to the profession of medicine, or that of the law.

As to the Catholic schools, there are but three of any note in England. One is in Hertfordshire, one near Birmingham, and a third near Wolverhampton in Staffordshire. The latter is by far the most numerous ; for the two others have generally no more than twenty or thirty boys, of the age of twelve or fourteen.

In foreign countries, the English Catholics have several colleges, monasteries, and nunneries. The college at Douay is the most considerable, and that of the Jesuits at St. Omer's is united with it, since the annihilation of that order. This college of the Jesuits was the most celebrated in its time, as a great school for classical improvements, and the English Catholics were supplied from thence with many ecclesiastics. On their being obliged to quit France, they erected an academy at Liege, which is at present in great estimation, and the richer English Catholics send their children thither for education. There are, besides, English colleges at Paris, at Rome, at Lisbon, and at Valledolid, in Spain. Many English

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monasteries of the Franciscan, Dominican, and Benedictine order, are to be met with abroad ; and at Lamspringe, in Lower Saxony, I have seen a fine English Benedictine monastery, where the monks find themselves very comfortably situated. No less than twenty-one English nunneries are reckoned abroad, which are mostly in France and in the Low Countries.

In Ireland the Roman Catholics are very numerous ; so much that the proportion between Protestants and Catholics is said to be one to five. A few years ago, a scheme was in agitation, to erect at Carlow, in Ireland, a Catholic college, for educating youths of the Romish persuasion, to prevent their money being spent in foreign countries ; but I have not heard that it has succeeded.

MORA-

## M O R A V I A N S.

**T**HIS sect, which had its origin in Germany, is known among us under the denomination of *Herrnkuthers*. In England they are called Moravians; but they themselves prefer the name of *Moravian* or *United Brethren*. According to the design of this work, I am to confine myself merely to their state in England, without retrospect to that in other countries. Mr. la Trobe, minister of the Moravian chapel in Fetter lane, who died not long ago, has translated from the German, a little work<sup>1</sup>, relative to this subject, written by Mr. Spangenberg, who not only as a Moravian bishop, could give the best account of his sect, but may be supposed to have really done so, from the character which he bears, even among other sects in Germany, as a man of probity.

<sup>1</sup> A Concise Historical Account of the present Constitution of the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Unity of the Evangelical Brethren, who adhere to the Augustan Confession. Translated from the German, with a Preface, by the rev. B. la Trobe. London 1775. 8vo.

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When count Zinzendorff, the founder of this sect, endeavoured to establish it in England, he met at first with considerable success. He found friends not only among the lower class of people, but also among the great; nay, even among the episcopal and dissenting clergy. Unluckily, however, for the count, a Mr. Rimius, a native of Germany, who resided in England, thought proper to translate and give extracts in English, from German publications, against the Moravians, and accompanied them with translations of some of their hymns. The effects which this publication produced, were very mortifying to the count. All his expectations, and his great hopes of the success with which, as he imagined, he should meet in Great Britain, appeared at once highly precarious; and there is no doubt, but that the publication of Rimius gave a mortal blow to Moravianism in England.

The Methodists and the Moravians were most intimate friends in the beginning. They erected in 1738, a chapel in Fetter-lane, which was to be common to both. John Wesley, who had got acquainted with some Moravians, who were in the same ship that carried him to America, shewed a great predilection for them.

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However, disputes and quarrels soon taking place between both parties, prognosticated that this friendship would not be of a long duration. Count Zinzendorff came over to England himself, in 1741, and he soon fell out with Mr. Wesley. The Methodists and the Moravians now separated; the latter keeping the chapel in Fetter-lane, and the other erecting a tabernacle in Moorfields, under Mr. Wesley, who shewed himself, from that time, a warm adversary of the Moravians. If it were not a fact which history confirms in so many instances, that two people, who both instigated by ambition, want to be the head of a party, will never agree, it would appear rather singular that Methodism and Moravianism, which both, in their leading features, are so much alike, could not unite and agree in harmony for their common success and prosperity. It might have been supposed, that this could have been done with the greater ease, as both parties pretend that they, by no means, want to form a distinct sect, but wish to be incorporated into others, and subsist among them.

The Moravians, or, as they rather choose to call themselves, the United Brethren, are not numerous in England, and their congregations are but small. But, they ought, as they say,  
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according to their constitution, to be so. The brethren, as they express themselves, are scattered over the whole globe, and make altogether but one congregation.

It appears from the above mentioned account of Mr. Spangenberg, that their present state in England is the following; for in all Scotland no Moravians are to be found, except a few in Air. In London they have the chapel in Fetter-lane, as I have mentioned before, to themselves, since the year 1742. There was formerly preaching every Sunday in German as well as in English; but now the former is dropped, and the whole service is in the latter language only. At Chelsea they have a chapel likewise, with a burying-ground; but the great house, which they possessed there, was disposed of several years ago. Besides these they have in England several chapels and congregation places, as they call them\*. One of the principal is at Fulneck in Yorkshire, where they have a congregation-house, in which is the chapel. There are also houses for the single brethren, single sisters, and widows, with æconomies or schools, in which the children of labourers, who cannot take proper care of them, are educated. At Bedford, Northamp-

\* Concise Historical Account, &c. p. 11—14.

ton, Oekbrook in Derbyshire, at Pudsey near Leeds, at Wyke not far from Halifax, at Thirfield in the neighbourhood of Wakefield, at Little Gumerfall, at Leominster in Herefordshire, at Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire, at Tetherton in Wiltshire, at Apperly in Gloucestershire, at Froome in Somersetshire, are Moravian chapels, congregations and societies. In some principal cities and towns, such as Bath, Bristol and Plymouth, they have the same. From the chapel at Bristol depends another at Kingswood; and at Duckenfield in Cheshire, they have a considerable establishment, a new chapel, two choir-houses, one for single brethren, and one for single sisters. A lately-erected chapel at Bullocksmithy, two miles from Stockport, is provided with preachers from Duckenfield.

These preachers are from different nations, Dutch, Swiss, Germans, Danes, and I have reason to suppose, that only a few English and a few Irish are to be found among them, though the foreigners preach, as I have been told, all in English, as well as they are able. The Moravians have a bishop who superintends their sect in England. The last was Dr. Wilson bishop of Sodor and Man, whom they had chosen for their bishop also, and which office he accepted.

ed. Who succeeded him, after his death, I have not been able to learn.

The Moravians are generally industrious people, but they do not so much keep together in England in communities among themselves, as they generally do in Germany. They carry on different trades to which they have been brought up, or which they have learned; they employ themselves in manufactures, and endeavour to earn their bread in the best manner they can. The idea which has prevailed, of their having a community of goods, is, at least at present, unfounded. Every one is master of his own property, and if he has any to dispose of, he does it as he thinks proper.

The heavy accusations of great immorality which this sect was formerly loaded with, have much subsided, and they bear, at present, wherever they are settled, the character of a sober, industrious set of people, who refrain from luxury and immorality. As for their speculative doctrines, I believe many of them to be inconsistent with common sense, and tainted with fanaticism; but those hymns, which formerly gave so much offence, and were thought to be compositions in the Fescennine taste, have been set aside and disused<sup>s</sup>.

<sup>s</sup> Concise Historical Account, p. 62.

## J E W S.

**I**T seems to be rather improbable, that there should have been no Jews in England before William the Conqueror, as has been asserted by some. Perhaps they never enjoyed so many privileges before, when compared with those, which were granted them by the sovereigns of the Norman line. They had not only permission to build a synagogue in London, but had even an *Alabarcha*, or a supreme magistrate of their own, by whom they were governed and judged according to their law, who went, in England, by the name of *Episcopus Judeorum*<sup>6</sup>. They were, however, much disliked by the nation in general for their usury, their clipping the coin, and for other reasons. This aversion and animosity broke out afterwards in horrid persecutions, of which particularly two, that under Richard I. about the year 1189, and that under Edward I. in 1290, bear marks of much cruelty. In the last mentioned year, they were obliged to quit the

<sup>6</sup> See Prideaux's *Connexion*, &c. vol. iii. p. 359. note w.

island entirely, and it is supposed that then above 15,000 emigrated<sup>7</sup>. Under Cromwell they made an attempt to establish themselves in England again, and offered a considerable sum of money to the protector to obtain his leave ; but, though he was, perhaps, inclined to do so, finding that the nation was against it, he gave it up. Under Charles II. several Jews settled in the kingdom, without any permission, and finding that they were connived at, and met with indulgence, others did the same. From that time the Jews have enjoyed full liberty of conscience in England, though they are not included in the Toleration-Act. Nay, in 1752, it went so far, that, in hopes of drawing many rich Jews from Portugal into the kingdom, leave was given, by an act of parliament, for their obtaining naturalization like other foreigners. Such violent opposition, however, was made to this act, that the year following it was repealed.

The number of Jews in England, women and children included, amount to no more than about 12,000. Of these, 11,000 reside in London, and the remaining 1000 in other towns,

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Tovey, in his *Anglia Judaica*, &c. gives an ample account of the fate of the Jews in England, and to him I refer those who wish to be more particularly informed.

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particularly Falmouth, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Exeter, Chatham, and Liverpool. In most of these places they have synagogues, or at least a large room, where they assemble for divine service. The Jews in London may be divided into two classes, the German and the Portuguese Jews, of which the latter is by far the smallest. In the former class are included all those who come from the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, and from the North. The Portuguese, whose number may be about 4000, consist of such as come from Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Barbary, and the Levant. That thousand, who live in other English towns, is made up by German Jews only, for the Portuguese are not fond of leaving the metropolis.

These latter have but one synagogue in London, in Heneage-lane, near St. Mary-Axe, which has a rabbi, and an assistant rabbi. Besides, the Portuguese Jews have a kind of academy or college, in which about twenty young students are instructed in rabbinical learning. The rabbi of the synagogue is the head of this college, and has several under-masters to assist him. I have reason to think, that among the Portuguese Jews, more learning is to be found than among the others. Even the pronunciation of the Hebrew, in the Portuguese syna-



gogues, is, at least, in my ears, more pleasing than that in the German, though I am myself accustomed to the latter. Comparatively speaking, the moral character and the manners of the Portuguese, are much superior to those of the German Jews; they are richer and more fond of cleanliness than the latter; these wear their beards, which the others do not, who therefore have not so much of that Jewish appearance, which otherwise is so easily observed. The Portuguese take care to maintain their poor; and though the German Jews likewise make some provision for their's, yet some of them, particularly Jewesses, are frequently seen begging in the streets.

They have three synagogues in London. One is in Duke's-place near Aldgate; the second in Church-row, Fenchurch-street; and the third in Leadenhall-street. The German Jews, as well as the Portuguese, are all Rabbiniſts, who receive the Talmud, and no Karaites are to be found in England.

The Jews here support themselves by some sort of traffic, as they do in all other countries, though they have people of almost every profession among them. The German Jews of the better class are much engaged in negotiating bills of exchange, and those of the poorer wander

der through the streets of London, which they fill with their noise in calling for old clothes, which they buy up, and mostly send abroad.

The praise which is due to the generality of the Portuguese, relative to their manners and morals, cannot be bestowed upon the majority of the German Jews. They are great sticklers for their old tenets and usages; but they allow themselves great liberties in regard to their morals. I believe few burglaries, robberies, and false coinages are committed, in which some of them are not, in one shape or other, concerned. They steal not only themselves, but assist Christian thieves by receiving their stolen goods, and buying them at a very reasonable price. In Duke's-place, where hardly any but Jews live, during the whole night furnaces are ready to melt the stolen silver and gold as soon as the thieves bring it, that it may be rendered indistinguishable before day-light.

At Mile-End, they have two considerable burying-grounds, where some poor Jewish families live that have the care of them. I remember that a rich Jew, some years ago, made a pilgrimage to the Holy-Land, and returned from thence with large boxes full of holy earth from Jerusalem. He ordered in his will, that

his grave should be well-lined with this superior clay, and the rest be thrown upon his coffin, to prevent its being touched by English earth. He believed that thus interred, he should be the more certain of being received into Abraham's bosom.

ATHEISTS,

## ATHEISTS, SCEPTICS, INDIFFERENTISTS, DEISTS.

**I**T is hardly to be credited, that there ever were men who, in the full use of their senses, and their rational faculties, should seriously have denied a first cause which gave existence to all things. When Diagoras of Melos, whom antiquity has stigmatized with the name of Atheist, denied the existence of their gods, because they did not punish a perjured fellow who had robbed him of some insignificant poems in praise of Apollo, he might be deemed for this a fool, but not an atheist from conviction. When the parliament of Toulouse pronounced a sentence upon Vanini, at which humanity shudders, notwithstanding he had proved, in a strong and moving manner, to his judges, the existence of a Deity from a straw which he had picked up at the bar before them, it is no wonder, that after he had heard it, he should talk like a man bereft of his senses. But this does not prove that he died a convinced atheist. Indeed much may be said

in justification of human reason, when it is degraded by those, who are marked in the annals of mankind with the denomination of Atheists. A man who makes proper use of his sound senses, must easily observe the hand of an omnipotent and all-wise Being, when he contemplates with any attention the world and the works of which it consists. The English generally make use of their reason, and I, therefore, am inclined to think, that there are but few, who pretend to be in their senses, and yet ascribe the existence of the universe to mere accident. Indeed, I originally supposed, that there were no professed Atheists in England; but this opinion I must retract, since a Mr. William Hammon, of Liverpool, has publicly declared himself to be one<sup>s</sup>. Whether by sound reasoning he came so far as to deny a first cause of all things, which is commonly called Deity, I much doubt; for his declaring publicly, upon his honour, that he is a proper

<sup>s</sup> Mr. William Hammon says: "Whereas some have doubted, whether there ever was such a thing as a proper Atheist; to put that out of all manner of doubt, I do declare, that, upon my honour, I am one. Be it therefore remembered, that in London, in the kingdom of England, in the year of our Lord 1781, a man has publicly declared himself an Atheist." Dr. PRIESTLEY's Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever.

Atheist,

Atheist, creates a suspicion that the faculties of his reason were, at that time, not so perfectly sound as might be wished. That there are numbers in England, as well as in other countries, who, in contemplating the Deity, will exclaim with the prophet, "thou art a God that hidest thyself<sup>9</sup>;" or acknowledge, with the heathen Simonides<sup>10</sup>, "*Quanto diutius confidero, tanto mihi res videtur obscurior,*" I readily believe; but, for this they cannot be blamed. People, who live and act as if there were no God, are in great abundance in England, and this sect is, without doubt, the most numerous over the whole globe.

More Sceptics are probably to be found in England than in most other countries, because the liberty of thinking and the liberty of the press, are so unrestrained, and because the generality of the English are not so much given to dogmatizing as the generality among other nations. There are, indeed, here and there, and particularly among the clergy, some who will talk in a decisive tone, and give their opinions rather in an oracular manner; but their number is not very great, and the more sensible people let them talk without regarding them.

<sup>9</sup> Isai. xlv. 15.  
cap. 22.

<sup>10</sup> Cic. de Natura Deorum, lib. i.

Those only will turn Sceptics, who know the weakness of human understanding, and the mistakes we are so liable to fall into; those only who are acquainted with the history of human errors and follies, and of the many ridiculous opinions that have been maintained for centuries together, and which were the cause of animosities, wars, and persecutions. The true Sceptic knows the narrow limits of human knowledge, and in many instances where others give themselves an air of being acquainted with every thing minutely, he will say with true modesty, "I do not know." Many of this enlightened character are to be found among the better sort of the English. And if this way of thinking had prevailed in the republic of letters, since arts and sciences have been cultivated, the annals of religion and literature would not contain so many scenes and transactions which put humanity and reason to the blush, and prove the want of good sense, and the depravity of the heart of those who pretended to be more enlightened than others. The stupid and obstinate Sceptic is here entirely out of the question. When Pyrrho pretended that life and death were equally indifferent to him, and yet anxiously hid himself behind a tree, for fear of being bitten by a dog, we can hardly for-  
bear

bear laughing at the fool ; but when Socrates modestly says, “ that he only knew, that he knew nothing <sup>1</sup> ;” the humility of the wise and his scepticism deserve admiration.

Of Indifferentists, according to the meaning of the word in the heretical catalogues, a great number are to be found among the English laity and clergy. Luxury which rises from time to time higher, and extends itself more and more, taxes which encrease at an enormous rate, produce an indifference about religion and virtue, among thousands, though not with regard to money and increase of fortune. Those who are not ashamed of professing that they respect religion as the means of promoting morality, let them be of whatever sect they will, Methodist and some others, perhaps, excepted, have generally imbibed the principles of toleration so well, that they do not exclude any body, by their own arbitrary decision, from the rewards of virtue, which men expect from the merciful hands of the Deity. This way of thinking and judging begins to prevail more and more in England ; but whoever, as formerly was too much the case, would from thence draw the

<sup>1</sup> Eo præstare ceteris, quod illi, quæ nesciant, scire se putent : ipse, se nihil scire, id unum sciat. *Cic. Academ. Quæst. lib. i. c. 4.*



inference that the English were Indifferentists, in that sense which the makers of heretics have annexed to the word, would betray the weakness both of his head and his heart.

There are, I believe, many Deists in England, though deistical writings appear, at present, not so frequently as they did about fifty years ago. Perhaps one of the reasons of this may be, that the subject has been much exhausted, and that the public in general care but little for publications relative to religion, which makes the booksellers rather cautious of hazarding the printing of them. Some, however, of this kind, have appeared within my time; but they have not excited that attention, or met with that opposition, which they probably might have been the cause of in an earlier part of this century. David Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, created more noise abroad than they did in England. *The Antiquity and Duration of the World*, by G. H. Toulmin, M. D. has roused the zeal of several orthodox men on the continent; but among his own countrymen he has, so far as I know, met with only one adversary, who published a pamphlet against him. Charles Crawford wrote, as a student at Cambridge, in the year 1773, a *Dissertation on the Phædon of Plato*, in which

which he violently attacked the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; but I have not heard that any body took the trouble to answer him in writing. What Mr. Gibbon has advanced against Christianity, in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has been honoured with a number of publications against it; and a *View of the internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*, by Soame Jenyns, has likewise met with many opponents. Besides these, other writings have appeared, which, either directly or indirectly, have been levelled against the Christian religion; but I will not recall them from that oblivion into which most of them are sunk long ago. I shall only observe, that the rev. Mr. David Williams opened, in the year 1776, a chapel in Margaret-street, in which the devotion was to be conducted on the general principles of piety and virtue. Divine worship was there performed without retrospect to any supernatural revelation, or any doctrines peculiar to Christianity. For this purpose, he composed and used a liturgy on the universal principles of religion and morality. It was thought in the beginning that this institution would meet with much obstruction, particularly from the clergy of the established church; but, for the honour of religious toleration, it remained

remained unmolested for four years, when it ceased, as I believe, for want of proper support.

Dr. Leland remarks\*, that the Deists are classed by some of their writers into two sorts, *mortal* and *immortal*; and adds, "it is to be feared, that the latter are the most numerous of the two." I believe, that of the *immortal* Deists, there are, at present, but very few, if any, and that Deism in general makes much progress in England, though by no means equal to what it does in France. Formerly, the attacks of the Deists against the Christian religion, were principally directed against the sacred writings, and the fundamentals of its faith founded upon them; but the modern Free-thinkers persuade themselves, that they have at last completed what lord Herbert of Cherbury, the father of the English Deists, attempted unsuccessfully to do, for reducing Deism to a system. They believe, that they have found the true principles, derived from reason and experience, by which they can overthrow all kinds of established religion. They, therefore, think that the attacks upon the Bible are entirely useless, and that, by defending and adhering to their pretended system and adopted

\* View of the principal Deistical Writers, vol. i. p. 2, 3.  
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favorite principles, they set all that authority effectually aside, which hitherto the professors of Christianity have attributed to their sacred writings. Though, at present, the Hell-fire club exists no more ; yet, if a new one were to be erected, I believe there would be by no means a want of persons who are abundantly qualified for such a fraternity.

It cannot be proved, that the life of theoretical Deists, who are become such by reasoning, is, in general, more immoral, than that of many others, who only profess religion outwardly. The latter too frequently indulge themselves in every vice and immorality, in the hope that at last they shall be reconciled to virtue and to God, by using those means which the Christian religion offers for obtaining the pardon of transgressions, and the remission of their punishments. Among the number of those who within the course of a twelve-month, are condemned in London to the gallows, not a dozen leave the world as hardened criminals ; and the instances are very scarce indeed of any one of them dying as a theoretical Deist, who had reflected and reasoned on the subject of religion. Most of those who expiate their crimes with the forfeiture of their lives, and who never cared for, or troubled themselves about the excellent moral

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precepts of Christianity, call out, the moment that they are turned off, Lord Jesus have mercy upon us, and think that from that moment they shall get into full possession of those future rewards, which religion promises to the virtuous. There are, no doubt, Deists who are unmindful of the obligations to which they are bound by reason, by the law of nature and by their own feelings; but, at the same time, there are others, who, in regard to their moral character, might deserve those encomiums which were so liberally and so justly bestowed on Anthony Collins, one of the most celebrated English Deists, for his humanity and general benevolence. It is true, St. Austin would give to the virtues of a heterodox man the name of splendid vices; but it were much to be wished, that many who assume the name of Christians, were guilty of them.

FANA-

## FANATICISM AND SUPERSTITION.

**I** HAVE had several times occasion to mention, in the foregoing account of the different sects, that several of them are tainted with fanaticism and enthusiasm; but there are some that deserve the name of Fanatics in the strictest sense of the word. In the English ecclesiastical history of former times, many more which come under this denomination were to be found then at present. Of the *Fifth Monarchy Men*, who, about the year 1661, went to work like madmen, none, nay, even hardly the remembrance of them, is left. The same must be said of those who were called *Ranters*, and resembled much in their fanatic opinions the Antinomians, though they surpassed them in the practice of a most immoral life. *Seekers*, who pretended that the true church, the true ministry, and the true administration of the sacraments were lost, are likewise no more. The followers of the taylor Muggleton are also extinct. This man, by sitting much as a taylor,

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lor, had contracted habits of a bad digestion, and by too much studying the Revelation, he had hurt his brains. He believed himself to be one of the two witnesses, who, clothed in sackcloth, were to prophesy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days; and he actually persuaded his friend John Reeve, likewise a taylor, that he was the other witness, upon which they both prophesied. Though many laughed at their folly, yet there were crazy people who became their devoted disciples. However, the prophets being dead, and their prophecies remaining unaccomplished, the admirers of Muggleton and his colleague are extinct. Of the *French Prophets*, who made in their time much noise, no more is to be heard. *Millenarians*, I believe, are at present but few in number, and the dreams of a Millenium seem to be pretty well over.

That Jacob Behmen and his writings have found great admirers in England, I have mentioned before. His *Life*, and a high panegyric upon him, were published but lately<sup>1</sup>. Few German authors have been more successful in acquiring celebrity among the English, than this countryman of ours. Among our writers of

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of the Life, Death, and wonderful Writings of Jacob Behmen*, by Francis Okely. Lond. 1780. 8vo.

any

any class, of which we may have reason to boast, there is, perhaps, none, who is half so well known in England, as the ignorant cobbler of Old-Seydenburg. The fame of authors, indeed, is rather precarious!

Swedenborg, however, has now acquired more celebrity than Jacob Behmen. His strange writings, his visions, and his religious opinions, have met with so many admirers, that he, after his death, has become the founder of a religious sect, which takes its denomination from him. There is even a chapel in London erected, which is called The New Jerusalem Chapel, in which, as I have been informed, the writings of Swedenborg are read and quoted with as much veneration and authority as the Bible.

Superstition is, perhaps, more prevalent in England than might be expected; and here and there, even some of that kind still subsists, upon which Mr. Addison makes serious observations, in his seventh number of the Spectator. Gypsies meet still with encouragement in their prophesying talents. Young girls present them their hands for inspection, to tell them their various fortunes. A Mrs. Corbyn professes herself, in public advertisements, to be a second Pythia; and, from the frequency of the



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invitations she gives in the newspapers, which require money for being inserted, it is reasonable to suppose that she has not a few customers, and is well paid by them. Muralt's observations, therefore, reflecting on the curiosity of English women, appear not to be without foundation\*. In Wales and in the Highlands of Scotland, a kind of superstition, which is called *second sight*, is very common. Many a Welshman would grow warm, if he were contradicted or smiled at, when he relates, that in his country funeral processions are to be seen several days before a patient dies, proceeding in their completest form, from the house where he lies ill to the church-yard.

It was not long ago, that I called upon an apothecary, a friend of mine, when I found him in deep meditation, endeavouring to decypher a kind of Abracadabra, written on a small piece of paper. We soon discovered it to be an old spurious tradition relating to Christ, which was written in English but backwards, with this addition, that whoever was afflicted with an ague, and wore that little scrap of paper, should be

\* He says in his *Lettres sur les Anglois*, p. 14. of the English women: *Elles sont curieuses de l'avenir, avides de prédictions et crédules*. But it may be asked, are the women in England only so?

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cured of it. My friend had taken this mark of superstition from a poor boy, who had laboured a long time under this illness, and had come to him for advice. The boy, on being asked, told him that his mother had gone with him to a man, who had cured many people of the ague, by hanging that bit of paper, in a little filken bag round his neck, but that it had availed him nothing, though he had worn it for several months. Curiosity prompted us to make a little enquiry after this conjurer, and we found that he lived in the neighbourhood, and had numbers of customers among the common people, who paid him rather more than their circumstances would well allow. Some stories of apparitions, and of disturbances said to be created by spectres, have happened within my time, and found, among numbers of people, more belief than I expected. They were related in some newspapers with all possible gravity; particularly one where the mischievous ghost had chosen his scene of action at Stockwell. Many people believed all these things not only to be true, but were even displeased at those who smiled at what they so seriously related. Sometimes I have diverted myself like Democritus in a playhouse, by watching the eyes and the countenances of the spectators, when some of

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1. The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the United States. It is argued that the study of the history of the United States is essential for a full understanding of the country and its people. The paper then discusses the various factors that have shaped the history of the United States, including the role of the government, the economy, and the culture.

2. The second part of the paper discusses the role of the government in the history of the United States. It is argued that the government has played a central role in the development of the country, and that its actions have shaped the course of history. The paper then discusses the various ways in which the government has influenced the country, including through its policies, its actions, and its institutions.

3. The third part of the paper discusses the role of the economy in the history of the United States. It is argued that the economy has played a central role in the development of the country, and that its growth has shaped the course of history. The paper then discusses the various ways in which the economy has influenced the country, including through its production, its distribution, and its consumption.

4. The fourth part of the paper discusses the role of the culture in the history of the United States. It is argued that the culture has played a central role in the development of the country, and that its values and beliefs have shaped the course of history. The paper then discusses the various ways in which the culture has influenced the country, including through its art, its literature, and its customs.

5. The fifth part of the paper discusses the role of the people in the history of the United States. It is argued that the people have played a central role in the development of the country, and that their actions have shaped the course of history. The paper then discusses the various ways in which the people have influenced the country, including through their participation in the government, their work, and their lives.

